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H a m l e t

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

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HAMLET

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HAMLET



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



CASSELL AND COMPANY, LIMITED

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1899

INTRODUCTION

SHAKESPEARE'S *Hamlet* was first printed in quarto in 1603. That First Quarto contains a very imperfect text, which was entered by James Robertes at Stationers' Hall on the 26th of July 1602, as "A booke called the Revenge of Hamlett Prince Denmarke, as yt was lateho Acted by the Lord Chamberleyne his servantes." The text of this publication was evidently unauthorised, and is very imperfect, but it contains indications of some touches of change that must have been made soon after the piece was first put upon the stage. Thus, the names of Polonius and his servant Reynaldo appear in this First Quarto as Corambis and Montano, and it is to be inferred also from its text, that there may have been some early readjustment of the lights and shades of character. James Robertes, who entered the book for publication, seems to have transferred his responsibility to N[icholas] L[ing], for whom and for John Trundell the First Quarto was printed, and a really good text of the play was afterwards obtained and printed in 1604, for N[icholas] L[ing] by I[ames] R[oberthes?]. The text of this Second Quarto, when collated with that of the first edition of Shakespeare's collected plays, published in 1623 by his fellow-players, Heminge and Condell, the edition known as the First Folio, practically assures to us the whole play as Shakespeare left it. The Second Quarto contains passages that are omitted in the First Folio, and the First Quarto helps now and then to settle a reading. There were three

other quartos, one in 1605, one undated [1607?], and one in 1611

The text of the present edition of *Hamlet* has been freshly compared throughout with the texts of the First and Second Quarto and of the First Folio, this being the first of a series of interspersed volumes, through which the editor hopes to include in THE NATIONAL LIBRARY his own edition of Shakespeare's Plays. Each play will be in a handy volume by itself, giving what the editor believes to be the nearest attainable approach to Shakespeare's text. The only sources of the modern text of a play of Shakespeare's are the quartos in which some of them appeared before their collection, and the folio into which they were collected, seven years after Shakespeare's death, by friends of his who had access to the play-house copies. Printed books of their days abounded in *errata*, which were added to whatever faults there might be in the copy printed from. A prudent editor has, therefore, to avoid much risk of injuring the text with new corruptions of his own.

The text here given was obtained in this manner, which may be taken to represent the degree of attention that will be given to the text of future volumes. The play was first printed from the text of Professor Delius, it was then minutely compared with the texts of the First and Second Quarto and the Folio, and with the text of Dyce's last edition which is, on the whole, the best yet issued. In one place an omitted line has been inserted, in one place a superfluous conjectural addition to the text, although it has been generally adopted, is struck out. In one place where there is an unquestionable misprint, "disasters in the sun," which various editors have sought in various unsatisfactory ways to correct, one more attempt has been made to give, if not the true reading, the true sense. Where a preceding correction is adopted, the adoption will, in all the little books of the plays of Shakespeare that appear from time to time among the volumes of the

NATIONAL LIBRARY, mean that the correction has been freshly considered and accepted. Where a change of word is not adopted, and the original text is fallen back upon, it means, and will mean, either that the present Editor takes the word in the original text to be the right word, or the error in the original to be one that has not yet been finally corrected. In all cases of doubt as to the value of corrections, the original text will be preferred. But while in such matters conservative, these little books will not be found conservative of that overload of punctuation with which many editors have destroyed the pliancy and often the sense of Shakespeare's poetry. There are here discharged from the text many of the little hooked commas that tortured it, and also the whole of that cruel apparatus of hooks through which good verse is dragged for no crimes of its own. Does any one want the printer of either prose or verse to print "hook'd" lest the reader should read "hookéd"? Surely it is enough if in the few cases where there is any variation from usage that is indicated by an accent, and in all other respects the verse of Shakespeare is left to be read as we read verse of Tennyson, or any other poet of the present day. The old butcherly array of hooks across a poet's lines remains to us now only as a superstition of the past in books that, by inadvertence, are still left, as Shakespeare has hitherto been left, encumbered with such useless furniture.

The story of Hamlet actually originates in an old Danish Saga, which found its way, in 1570, from Saxo Grammaticus into the fifth volume of *Histoires tragiques*, by François de Belleforest, as a tale showing *Avec quelle ruse Amleth, qui depuis fut roy de Dannemarch, vengea la mort de son pere Horvendille, occis par Fengon son frere, et autre occurrence de son histoire*. An English version of the tale in Belleforest appeared as the *Historie of Hamblet*, and it was also made into an English play, now lost, that preceded

Shakespeare's This must have served as a starting point for Shakespeare's invention In an epistle by Thomas Nash, before Robert Greene's novel of "Menaphon," in 1589, there is an allusion to the shifty playwrights, who from English Seneca may draw "whole *Hamlets*, I should say handfulls of tragical speeches," and in the Diary of Henslowe, the actor, there is mention of a *Hamlet* represented, June 9th, 1594, in the theatre at Newington Butts, which was an old play, from which Henslowe only got eight shillings for his share of the proceeds

Shakespeare's play opens with watch over the sea against attack by Fortinbras for the recovery of land lost thirty years before, when the father of Fortinbras, the King of Norway, lost the land, and with it his life, wagered by him in duel with the father of Hamlet The time elapsed since that duel, which was on the day of Hamlet's birth, is precisely told in the fifth act (pages 166-7) where the grave-digger says that he became a grave-digger "that day that our last King Hamlet o'ercame Fortinbras," which was "the very day that young Hamlet was born," and presently adds, "I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years" Thus Shakespeare clearly fixes Hamlet's age as thirty Young Fortinbras can hardly be younger, since his father was killed on the day of Hamlet's birth We can only think of him as a young child when his father's brother succeeded to rule in Norway, according to the old usage (illustrated also in *Macbeth*) that set aside direct succession if the king's son was not of age to be a leader of the people But Hamlet was a man in years, though not in action, when he left his uncle free to take the throne

Throughout the play, Fortinbras serves as a foil to Hamlet Fortinbras is a man of action, who thinks little, Hamlet is a man of the highest intellectual culture, in whom thought is ever busy, in whom

"The native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment,
With this regard their currents turn awry
And lose the name of act on

At the opening of the play there is stir of warlike preparation in Denmark and strict watch against the sudden energies of Fortinbras, who is expected to make a bold dash for the lands his father lost. Into the midst of the watch comes one from the other world, to give Hamlet something that he must not only think upon, but do. As Shakespeare reads life, every one who has come to manhood has to do his work. In youth we prepare for our work, but after we have entered on life's active duties all study is but the care to keep our arms from rusting, arms that we have daily to use. Hamlet when the play opens, has only been drawn from his enjoyment of the studious university life by his father's sudden death, followed within a month by his uncle's marriage with his mother. When the play opens he is still at Elsinore, his father "but two months dead, nay, not so much, not two," and his mother had married.

"Within a month,—

Let me not think on't Frailty, thy name is woman."

His mother's marriage pains him yet more than his father's death. When he hears of his father's spirit in arms his thought flashes at once to suspicion of his uncle. The spirit confirms his suspicion. He has no doubt that it is his duty to avenge the murder of his father. But, in the first conviction he plans already simulation of madness that shall give him opportunities of secret observation.

As I perhaps hereafter shall think meet,
To put an antic disposition on "

The device is that of a mind already "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." Had Fortinbras been so

* summoned to action, the king would have been dead in an hour. When, later in the play, by the killing of Polonius Laertes, who serves also as a contrast to Hamlet, is in Hamlet's position, with a father killed, he is back from Paris in a whirlwind beating at the palace gates. But at the close of the first act, Hamlet's exclamation after he has learnt his duty is,

"The time is out of joint O, curs'd spite,
That ever I was born to set it right"

No man healthily active would in Hamlet's position either have felt it necessary to break from the woman whom he deeply loved, or to use the tricks of a feigned madness to cover self-indulgence in a long, last farewell look. Time presses, and much is thought and felt, but nothing done. When the players come, to whom, as delighting him with shadows of action, he had been a good patron at the University, and when one of the players loses himself in the griefs of Hecuba, Hamlet reproaches himself with self-comparison

"What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have?"

"About my brains!" is the result, and still only the brain works. The spirit may have been the devil in a pleasing shape. Hamlet will put its truth to test by the device of the play, in which the King shall see the image of his crime

"If his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen"

It does unkennel itself. Hamlet absolutely knows his uncle's guilt, but it is by a method that reveals his knowledge to his uncle, whom an evil conscience had made eager to discover whether some such knowledge did not lie at the root of Hamlet's change of manner

And now, why does not Hamlet kill the King? An every opportunity offers. But his mind is again too busy; he refrains out of no spirit of mercy, but because he cannot kill the King enough. The King is praying. Killed now he might find heaven. Hamlet will wait till he can kill more perfectly, body and soul. And two months have now slipped by since Hamlet undertook his duty. This is marked by a passage in the play scene. "How cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within two hours." Ophelia "Nay, his twice two months, my lord." At the beginning of the play, it was "Nay, not two months, not two." The King, who has learnt from Hamlet the danger to himself loses no time, though Hamlet still delays. Hamlet allows himself to be shipped off to England, with secret orders for his execution there. While he is still thus passive, he sees the forces of young Fortinbras, whose preparation against Denmark has been diverted to the Polack, pass over a plain before him, and again has clear intellectual sense of his own fault. He can tell himself what the play tells to us all, that—

"He that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and God like reason
To fust in us unused."

All deeds of Hamlet are by action without premeditation. By sudden impulse he stabs Polonius behind the arras, without time even to give full birth to the thought that he may be killing the King. No thinking of his could possibly have foreseen or brought the pirate ship that came into engagement with the ship carrying him to England, and it was not even with design so to return to Denmark that he leapt to the other deck as the ships grappled for action.

But when he had returned he was again passive. He accepted passively the challenge to the fencing match, and when he at last did kill his own and his father's murderer, it was by action on the impulse of

the moment. It was done rashly, as Hamlet said to Horatio of an act of his on board the ship, and Hamlet's comment on this rashness has in it the soul of the play—

“Let us know

Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well

When our deep plots do pall, and that should teach us,

There's a divinity that shapes our ends

Rough hew them how we will.”

How many Hamlets are there in the world with intellectual power for large usefulness, who wait, day by day and year by year, in hope to do more perfectly what they live to do; die, therefore, and leave their lives unused while men of lower power, prompt for action, are content and ready to do what they can, well knowing that at the best they can only rough hew, but in humble trust that leaves to God the issues of the little service they may bring. It is a last touch to the significance of this whole play that at its close the man whose fault is the reverse of Hamlet's—the man of ready action, though it be with little thought, the stir of whose energies was felt in the opening scene—re-enters from his victory over the Polack, and the curtain falls on Fortinbras King

H M

HAMLET. PRINCE OF DENMARK

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

CLAUDIUS, *King of Denmark*
 HAMLET, *Son to the former,
 and Nephew to the present
 King*

HOBATIO, *Friend to Hamlet*

POLONIUS, *Lord Chamberlain*

LARTES, *his Son*

VOLTIMAND,

CORNELIUS,

ROSENCRANTZ,

GUILDENSTERN

OSRIC,

A Gentleman,

A Priest

MARCELLUS,

BERNARDO,

FRANCISCO, *A Soldier*

REYNALDO, *Servant to Polo-
 nius*

A Captain

English Ambassadors

Ghost of Hamlet's Father

FORTINBRAS, *Prince of Nor-
 way*

Players

Two Clowns, Grave-diggers

GERTRUDE, *Queen of Den-
 mark, and Mother to Ham-
 let*

OPHELIA, *Daughter to Polo-
 nius*

*Lords, Ladies, Officers, Sol-
 diers, Sailors, Messengers,
 and Attendants*

SCENE—ELSNORE, except in the fourth scene of the fifth act,
 where it is a PLAIN IN DENMARK

ACT I.

SCENE I—Elsinore A Platform before the
 Castle

FRANCISCO, *a sentinel* BERNARDO *enters to relieve
 him*

Ber Who's there?

Fran Nay, answer me stand, and unfold your
 self

Ber Long live the king!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber He

Fran You come most carefully upon your
hou

Ber 'T is now struck twelve get thee to bed,
Francisco

Fran. For this relief much thanks 't is bitter
cold,

And I am sick at heart

Ber Have you had quiet guaid?

Fran Not a mouse stirring

Ber Well, good night

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,

The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste

Fran I think I hear them — Stand! Who's
there?

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS

Hor Friends to this ground *long accounty*

Mar And liegemen to the Dane

Fran Give you good night *Subjects*

Mar O, farewell, honest soldier who hath
relieved you?

Fran. Bernardo has my place Give you good
night

Mar Holla! Bernardo!

[Exit

Where now it burns, Marcellus, and myself
The bell then beating one,—

Enter Ghost

Mar. Peace! break thee off look, where it
comes again!

Ber In the same figure, like the king that's dead

Mar Thou art a scholar, speak to it, Horatio

Ber Looks it not like the king? mark it,
Horatio

Hor Most like!—It harrows me with fear and
wonder *how fair, so like!*

Ber. It would be spoke to

Mar Question it, Horatio

Hor What art thou, that usurp'st this time of
night,

Together with that fair and warlike form

In which the majesty of buried Denmark

Did sometimes march? by Heaven I charge thee,
speak!

Mar It is offended

Ber See, it stalks away!

Hor. Stay! speak, speak, I charge thee, speak!

[Exit Ghost]

Mar 'T is gone, and will not answer

Ber How now, Horatio? you tremble and look
pale

Is not this something more than fantasy?

What think you on 't?

Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe,
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Hor. Is it not like the king?

Hor. As thou art to thyself

Such was the very armour he had on

When he the ambitious Norway combated

So frowned he once when, in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice

'Tis strange!

Mar. Thus twice before, and jump at this dead
hour,

With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch

Hor. In what particular thought to work, I know
not,

But in the gross and scope of mine opinion,

This bod's some strange eruption to our state

Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that
knows,

Why this same strict and most observant watch

So nightly toils the subject of the land?

And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,

And foreign mart for implements of war?

Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore

Does not divide the Sunday from the week?
 What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
 Doth make the night joint-labourer with the
 day?

Who is't that can inform me?

Hor That can I;
 At least, the whisper goes so (Our last king,
 Whose image even but now appeared to us,
 Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
 Thereto pricked on by a most emulate pride,
 Dared to the combat, in which our valiant

Hamlet

For so this side of our known world esteemed
 him—

Did slay this Fortinbras, who, by a sealed compact

Well ratified by law and heraldry,

Did forfeit with his life all those his lands

Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror

Against the which, a moiety competent

Was gaged by our king, which had returned
 To the inheritance of Fortinbras

Had he been vanquisher, as, by the same compact
 And carriage of the article designed,

His fell to Hamlet) Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
 Of unimproved mettle hot and full

Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there,

Sharked up a list of lawless resolute^{dec},
 For food and diet, to some enterprise
 That hath a stomach in 't, which is no other—
 As it doth well appear unto our state
 But to recover of us, by strong hand
 And terms compulsative, those 'foresaid lands
 So by his father lost. And thus, I take it,
 Is the main motive of our preparations,
 The source of this our watch, and the chief head
 Of this post-laste and romage in the land
 Ber I think, it be no other, but e'en so
 Well may it sort that this portentous figure
 Comes armed through our watch, so like the
 king

That was, and is, the question of these wars
 Hor A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye
 (In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
 A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
 The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted
 dead

Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets,
 And stars with trains of fire, and dewa of blood,
 Disastious omen gave, and the moist star,
 Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
 Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse,
 And even the like preuse of fierce events—
 As harbingers preceding still the fates,
 7-1/2. 12. late XXIV 29 1/2 12

And prologue to the omen coming on—
 Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
 Unto our clamatures and countrymen —

Enter Ghost

Re enter Ghost

But, soft ! behold ! lo, where it comes again !
 I'll cross it, though it blast me — Stay, illusion,
 If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
 Speak to me ' *[It spreads its arms*

If there be any good thing to be done,
 That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
 Speak to me ' *[It spreads its arms*

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
 Which happily foreknowing may avoid,
 O, speak ! *[It spreads its arms*

Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
 Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
 For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,

[The cock crows

Speak of it, stay, and speak !—Stop it, Marcellus

Mar Shall I strike at it with my partisan ?

Hor Do, if it will not stand *[The cock crows]*

Ber T is here !

Hor 'T is here !

Mar 'T is gone ! *[Exit Ghost]*

We do it wrong, being so majestic,
 To offer it the show of violence

For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery .

Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it started, like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day , and, at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
The extravagant and erring spirit lies
To his confine , and of the truth herein
This present object made probation.

Mar (It faded on the crowing of the cock.
Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long
And then, they say, no spirit can walk abroad ;
The nights are wholesome ; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time)

Hor So have I heard, and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill,
Break we our watch up , and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet . for, upon my life
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.

Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

Mar Let's do 't, I pray, and I this morning
know

Where we shall find him most convenient

[*Exeunt*

SCENE II.—The Same A Room of State

*Flourish Enter the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET,
POLONIUS, LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS,
Lords, and Attendants*

King Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's
death

The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe,
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves
Therefore, our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress of this warlike state,
Have we, as 't were with a defeated joy,—
With an auspicious and a dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—
Taken to wife nor have we herein barred

Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along for all, our thanks.
Now follows that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death,
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
Colleaguéd with the dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father with all bands of law,
To our most valiant brother —So much for him
Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting
(Thus much the business is We have here
writ

To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress
His further gait herein, in that the levies,
The lists, and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subject) and we here despatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway .
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the king, more than the scope
Of these dilated articles allow
Farewell, and let your haste commend your
duty.

Cor, Vol In that, and all things, will we show
our duty

King We doubt it nothing heartily farewell

[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?

(You told us of some suit, what is 't, Laertes?

You cannot speak of reason to the Dane

And lose your voice what wouldst thou beg,
Laertes,

That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?

The head is not more native to the heart,

The hand more instrumental to the mouth,

Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.

What wouldst thou have, Laertes?)

Laer

Dread my lord,

Your leave and favour to return to France,

From whence though willingly I came to Denmark

To show my duty in your coronation,

Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,

My thoughts and wishes bend again toward
France

And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon

King Have you your father's leave? What
says Polonius?

Pol He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow
leave

By labour some petition, and, at last,

Upon his will I sealed my hard consent
I do beseech you, give him leave to go

King Take thy fair hour, Laertes, time be
thine,

And thy best graces spend it at thy will.—
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

Ham [*Aside*] A little more than kin, and less
than kind

King How is it that the clouds still hang on
you ?

Ham Not so, my lord, I am too much i' the
sun

Queen Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark
Do not for ever with thy vailéd lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust
Thou know'st, 't is common, all that lives must
die,

Passing through nature to eternity

Ham Ay, madam, it is common

Queen. If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee ?

Ham { Seems, madam ' nay, it is, I know not
' seems '

'T is not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,

No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
 Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
 Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief.
 That can denote me truly these, indeed, seem,
 For they are actions that a man might play.
 But I have that within, which passeth show,
 These but the trappings and the suits of woe.]

King ('Tis sweet and commendable in your
 nature, Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father.
 But you must know your father lost a father;
 That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound
 In filial obligation for some term
 To do obsequious sorrow ^{complacent & amiable} but to persevere
 In obstinate con dolement, is a course
 Of impious stubbornness, 't is unmanly grief,
 It shows a will most incorrect to Heaven,
 A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
 An understanding simple and unschooled.
 For what we know must be, and is as common
 As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
 Why should we, in our peevish opposition,
 Take it to heart?) *He!* 't is a fault to Heaven,
 A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
 To reason most absurd, whose common theme
 Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
 From the first corse till he that died to day, *

'This must be so') We pray you, throw to
earth

This unprevailing woe, and think of us
As of a father for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne,
And with no less nobility of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son
Do I impart toward you For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire,
And we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son

Queen Let not thy mother lose her prayers,
Hamlet

I pray thee, stay with us, go not to Wittenberg

Ham I shall in all my best obey you, madam

King Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply:
Be as ourself in Denmark — (Madam, come,
This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart 'in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
And the king's rouse the heavens shall bruit
again,

Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away)

[*Flourish* *Exeunt all, but HAMLET*

Ham O, that this too too solid flesh would
melt,

Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew,
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God!
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on't! Ah fie! 'tis an unweeded garden
That grows to seed, things rank and gross in
nature

Possess it merely. 'That it should come to this!
But two months dead,—nay, not so much, not
two!

So excellent a king; that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr, so loving to my mother,
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? why, she would hang on
him

As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on, and yet, within a month,—
Let me not think on't,—Frailty, thy name is
woman!—

A little month, or e'er those shoes were old
With which she followed my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears,—why she, even she—
O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,

Would have mourn'd longer—married with my
uncle ,)

My father's brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules . within a month,
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her gall'd eyes,
She married —O most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets !
It is not, nor it cannot come to, good
But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue !

Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO

Hor. Hail to your lordship !

Ham I am glad to see you well .

Horatio,—or I do forget myself

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant
ever

Ham Sir, my good friend , I'll change that
name with you

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio ?—
Marcellus ?

Mar My good lord,—

Ham. I am very glad to see you.—[*To BERNARDO*] Good even, sir —

But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg ?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham I would not hear your enemy say so :

Nor shall you do mine ear that violence
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself I know, you are no truant.
But what is your affair in Elsinore?
We'll teach you to drink deep, ere you depart

Hor My lord, I came to see your father's
funeral

Ham I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow
student,

I think, it was to see my mother's wedding

Hor Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.

Ham Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral baked
meats

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

Ere I had ever seen that day, Horatio!—

My father,—methinks I see my father—

Hor O, where, my lord?

Ham In my mind's eye, Horatio.—

Hor I saw him once he was a goodly king

Ham He was a man, take him for all in all,

I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor My lord, I think I saw him yesternight

Ham Saw, who?

Hor My lord, the king your father.

Ham The king my father

Hor Season your admiration for a while

Hor My lord, I did ,
But answer made it none , yet once, methought,
It lifted up its head, and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak ,
But even then the morning cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanished from our sight

Ham 'T is very strange.

Hor As I do live, my honoured lord, 't is true ,
And we did think it writ down in our duty,
To let you know of it

Ham Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles
me

Hold you the watch to-night ?

Mar , Ber

We do, my lord.

Ham. Armed, say you ?

Mar , Ber

Armed, my lord.

Ham

From top to toe ?

Mar , Ber My lord, from head to foot

Ham

Then, saw you not his face ?

Hor O ! yes, my lord , he wore his beaver up

Ham What, looked he frowningly ?

Hor A countenance more in sorrow than in
anger

Ham Pale, or red ?

Hor Nay, very pale

Ham

And fixed his eyes upon you ?

Hor. Most constantly

Ham I would I had been there.

Hor It would have much amazed you

Ham. Very like, very like. Staid it long?

Hor While one with moderate haste might tell
a hundred

Mar, Ber. Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I saw 't.

Ham His beard was grizzled? no?

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silvered

Ham. I will watch to night
Perchance, 't will walk again

Hor I warrant it will

Ham If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all
If you have hitherto concealed this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still,
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue.
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well:
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you

All. Our duty to your honour

Ham Your loves, as mine to you. Farewell.

[*Exeunt* HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.]

And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
 Contagious blastments are most imminent
 Be wary then, best safety lies in fear
 Youth to itself rebels, though none else near

Oph I shall the effect of this good lesson keep
 As watchman to my heart But, good my brother,
 Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
 Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
 Whilst, like a puffed and reckless libertine,
 Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads
 And recks not his own rede

Laer O, fear me not.
 I stay too long,—but here my father comes :

Enter POLONIUS

A double blessing is a double grace,
 Occasion smiles upon a second leave

Pol Yet here, Laertes? aboard, aboard, for
 shame !

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
 And you are stayed for There,—my blessing
 with thee ,

[*Laying his hand on LAERTES' head.*]

And these few precepts in thy memory
 See thou character Give thy thoughts no tongue,
 Nor any unproportioned thought his act
 Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar :

The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel ,
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatched, unfledged couráge Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel , but, being in,
Bear 't that the opposéd may beware of thee
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice ,
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judg-
ment.

Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not expressed in fancy , rich, not gaudy
For the apparel oft proclaims the man ,
And they in France of the best rank and station
Are most select and generous in that.
Neither a borrower, nor a lender be ,
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry
Thus above all,—to thine own self be true ,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man
Farewell , my blessing season this in thee !

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my
lord

Pol The time invites you go, your servants
tend

Laer Farewell, Ophelia , and remember well
What I have said to you.

Oph 'T is in my memory locked,

And you yourself shall keep the key of it

Laer Farewell [Exit

Pol What is 't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph So please you, something touching the Lord
Hamlet

Pol Marry, well bethought

'T is told me, he hath very oft of late

Given private time to you, and you yourself

Have of your audience been most free and boun-
teous

If it be so, (as so 't is put on me,

And that in way of caution,) I must tell you,

You do not understand yourself so clearly

As it behoves my daughter and your honour.

What is between you? give me up the truth.

Oph He hath, my lord, of late made many
tenders

Of his affection to me.

Pol Affection? pooh! you speak like a green
girl

Unsifted in such perilous circumstance

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should
think

Pol Marry, I'll teach you think yourself a
baby,

That you have taken these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling Tender yourself more
dearly,

Or, not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus, you'll tender me a fool

Oph My lord, he hath importuned me with
love

In honourable fashion

Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it, go to, go to

Oph And hath given countenance to his speech,
my lord,

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Pol' Ay, springes to catch woodcocks I de
know,

When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows these blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,
Even in their promise as it is a-making —

You must not take for fire. From this time,
Be somewhat scantier of your maiden presence -
Set your entreatments at a higher rate

Than a command to parley For Lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young,
And with a larger tether may he walk

Than may be given you In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows, for they are brokers,
Not of that dye which their investments show.

But mere implorators of unholy suits
 Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds
 The better to beguile. This is for all,—
 I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
 Have you so slander any moment's leisure
 As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
 Look to't, I charge you come your ways
Oph I shall obey, my lord [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV —The Platform.

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS

Ham. The air bites shrewdly, it is very cold

Hor It is a nipping and an eager air

Ham What hour now?

Hor. I think it lacks of twelve

Mar No, it is struck

Hor Indeed? I heard it not it then draws
 near the season

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off,
 within Can - - - -

What does this mean, my lord?

Ham The king doth wake to-night, and takes
us drinking his rouse,
 Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels,

And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge

Hor

Is it a custom?

Ham Ay, marry, is't.

But to my mind,—though I am native here,
And to the manner born,—it is a custom
More honoured in the breach than the observance
This heavy-headed revel, east and west
Makes us traduced and taxed of other nations
They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
all Soil our addition, and, indeed, it takes
From our achievements, though performed at
little
height,

The pith and marrow of our attribute

So, oft it chances in particular men

That for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As, in their birth, (wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin,) *natural defect*

By their o'ergrowth of some complexion,
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,
Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens
The form of plausible manners,—that these men,—
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect, *of reason, for*
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,—
Their virtues else, be they as pure as grate, *a mark of nature for*
As infinite as man may undergo,

Shall in the general censure take corruption,
 From that particular fault the dram of eale ^{of poison}
 Doth all the noble substance often dout ^{a small admixt} of baseness,
 To his own scandal ^{an otherwise noble and virtuous} nature will turn its very nobility
 and virtues into subjects for reproach

Enter Ghost

Hor.

Look, my lord ! it comes

Ham Angels and ministers of grace defend

us —

Be thou a spirit ^{health giving} of health, or goblin damned, ^{of prosperity or bliss} blissful
 Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from
 hell,

Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
 Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
 That I will speak to thee I'll call thee Hamlet,
 King, father, royal Dane O answer me,
 Let me not burst in ignorance, but tell,
 Why thy canonised bones, hearsed in death, ^a
 Have burst their cerements, ^{coffined place} why the sepulch'r
 Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urned, ⁱⁿ
 Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws
 To cast thee up again What may this mean,
 That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,
 Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
 Making night hideous, and we fools of nature,
 So horribly to shake our disposition, ^{that we, the}
 With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls ?

Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we
do?
[*The Ghost beckons*

Hor It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone

Mar Look, with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground
But do not go with it *beckons*

Hor No, by no means

Ham. It will not speak then will I follow
it

Hor Do not, my lord.

Ham Why, what should be the
fear?

I do not set my life at a pin's fee,
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again — I'll follow it.

Hor What if it tempt you toward the flood, my
lord,

Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form

Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
sway And draw you into madness? think of it
The very place puts toys of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain

That looks so many fathoms to the sea

And hears it roar beneath

Ham It waves me still.—go on, I'll follow thee

Mar You shall not go, my lord

Ham Hold off your hands

Hor Be ruled, you shall not go

Ham My fate cries out,

And makes each petty artery in this body

As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve

[*The Ghost beckons.*

Still am I called—Unhand me, gentlemen,—

[*Breaking from them*

By Heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me —

I say, away!—Go on, I'll follow thee

[*Exeunt Ghost and HAMLET*

Hor He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar Let's follow, 't is not fit thus to obey him

Hor Have after To what issue will this er come?

Ma. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark

Hor Heaven will direct it

Mar Nay, let's follow him,

[*Exeunt*

SCENE V.—A more remote Part of the Platform

Enter Ghost and HAMLET

Ham Whither wilt thou lead me? speak, I'll go
no further

Ghost Mark me

Ham I will

Ghost My hour is almost come
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious
hearing
To what I shall unfold

Ham Speak, I am bound to hear

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt
hear

Ham What?

Ghost I am thy father's spirit,
Doomed for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away But that I am
forbid

To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word

Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes like stars start from their
spheres,

Thy knotted and combinéd locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine ,
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood.—List, list, O list !—
If thou didst ever thy dear father love,—

Ham O God !

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder

Ham Murder?

Ghost Murder most foul, as in the best it is,
But this, most foul, strange, and unnatural

Ham Haste me to know't, that I, with wings
as swift

As meditation, or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

Host

I find thee apt

And duller should thou be than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet,
hear

T is given out, that, sleeping in mine orchard,
A serpent stung me , so the whole car of Denmark
Is by a forged process, of my death

Rankly abused ; but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

Ham. O my prophetic soul !
My uncle !

Ghost Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate
beast,

With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,—
O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce —won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.
O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there !
From me, whose love was of that dignity
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage , and to decline
Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine !

But virtue, as it never will be moved
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,
So lust, though to a radiant angel linked
Will sate itself in a celestial bed
And prey on garbage
But, soft ! methinks, I scent the morning air
Brief let me be —Sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always in the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of curséd hebenon in a vial

And in the porches of my ears did pour
The leperous distilment, whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man
That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body,
And with a sudden vigour it doth possess
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood so did it mine;
And a most instant tetter barked about,
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust
All my smooth body
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, and queen, at once despatched;
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled,
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head
O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught leave her to Heaven,
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge
To prick and sting her Fare thee well at once!
The glow worm shows the matin to be near,

And gins to pale his uneffectual fire

Adieu, adieu, adieu ! remember me [Exit

Ham. O all you host of heaven ! O earth !—What
else ?

And shall I couple hell ? O fie !—Hold, hold, my
heart,

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,

But bear me stiffly up !—Remember thee !

Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat

In this distracted globe Remember thee !

Yea, from the table of my memory

I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,

All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past

That youth and observation copied there ,

And thy commandment all alone shall live

Within the book and volume of my brain,

Unmixed with baser matter yes, by Heaven !

O most pernicious woman !

O villain, villain, smiling, damnéd villain !

My tables,—meet it is, I set it down,

That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain

At least, I am sure, it may be so in Denmark .

[Writing

So, uncle, there you are Now to my word ,

It is, ' Adieu, adieu ! remember me.'

I have sworn 't

Hor [Within] My lord ! my lord !

Mar [Within] Lord Hamlet !
Hor [Within] Heaven secure him !
Mar [Within.] So be it !
Hor [Within] Illo, ho, ho, my lord !
Ham Hillo, ho, ho, boy ! come, bird, come.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS

Mar How is't, my noble lord ?
Hor What news, my lord ?
Ham O wonderful !
Hor Good my lord, tell it
Ham No, you will reveal it.
Hor Not I, my lord, by Heaven
Mar Nor I, my lord
Ham How say you, then, would heart of man
once think it ?—

But you'll be secret ?

Hor, Mar Ay, by Heaven, my lord.

Ham. There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark,

But he's an arrant knave.

Hor There needs no ghost, my lord, come from
the grave,

To tell us this

Ham Why, right, you are in the right,
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part :

You, as your business and desire shall point
you,

For every man hath business and desire,
Such as it is , and, for my own poor part,
I will go pray

Hor These are but wild and whirling words, my
lord

Ham I am sorry they offend you, heartily ,
Yea, 'faith, heartily

Hor There 's no offence, my lord

Ham Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is,
Horatio,

And much offence too Touching this vision
here,

It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster 't as you may And now, good
friends,

As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Hor What is 't, my lord ? we will

Ham Never make known what you have seen
to night

Hor , Mar My lord, we will not

Ham Nay, but swear 't

Hor In faith.

My lord, not I

Mar Nor I, my lord, in faith

Ham Upon my sword.

Mar We have sworn, my lord, already.

Ham. In deed, upon my sword, in deed.

Ghost [*Beneath.*] Swear

Ham Ha, ha, boy ! say'st thou so ? art thou there, true-penny ?

Come on,—you hear this fellow in the cellarage,—
Consent to swear.

Hor Propose the oath, my lord.

Ham Never to speak of this that you have
seen,

Swear by my sword.

Ghost [*Beneath*] Swear

Ham *Hic et ubique* ? then we'll shift our
ground —

Come hither, gentlemen,

And lay your hands again upon my sword :

Never to speak of this that you have heard,

Swear by my sword

Ghost [*Beneath*] Swear

Ham Well said, old mole ! canst work i' the
earth so fast ?

A worthy pioner !—Once more remove, good
friends.

Hor O day and night, but this is wondrous
strange !

Ham. And therefore let a stranger give it welcome.

There are more things in heaven and earth,
Horatio,

Than are dreamt of in your philosophy. *

But come;—

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,

How strange or odd 't is I hear myself,—

As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet

To put an anticlinal disposition on,—

That you, at such times, seeing me, never shall

With eyes so camber'd thus, or this head shake,

Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,

As, 'Well, well, we know ;'—or, 'We could, an
if we would,'—

Or, 'If it list to speak,'—or, 'There be, an if
they might,'—

Or such ambiguous giving out, to note

That you know aught of me —this not to do,

So grace and mercy at your most need help you,

Swear.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear

Ham. Her^d, rest, perturbed spirit'—So, gentlemen,
men,

With all my love I do commend me to you

And what so poor a man as Hamlet is

May do to express his love and friending to you,

God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together ;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray
The time is out of joint O curséd spite,
That ever I was born to set it right !
Nay, come, let's go together [Exeunt

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in the House of POLONIUS

Enter POLONIUS and REYNALDO

Pol Give him this money, and these notes, Reynaldo

Rey I will, my lord

Pol You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,

Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour

Rey My lord, I did intend it

Pol Marry, well said very well said Look
you, sir,

Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris ,
And how, and who, what means, and where they
keep,

What company, at what expense , and finding,
By this encompassment and drift of question,
That they do know my son, come you more
 nearer

Than your particular demands will touch it .
Take you, as 't were, some distant knowledge of
him,

As thus,—‘ I know his father, and his friends,
And, in part, him ’—do you mark this, Rey-
naldo?

Rey Ay, very well, my lord

Pol '—and, in part, him, but,' you may say,
'not well

But if 't be he I mean, he's very wild,
Addicted so and so, '—and there put on him
What forgeries you please,—marry, none so
rank

As may dishonour him take heed of that,
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips,
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty

Rey As gaming, my lord

Pol Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing,
Quarrelling, drabbing you may go so far

Key My lord, that would dishonour him

Pol. 'Faith, no, as you may season it in the charge

What was I about to say ?—By the mass, I was
About to say something —where did I leave ?

Rey At 'closes in the consequence,'
At 'friend or so,' and 'gentleman '

Pol At 'closes in the consequence,'—ay, marry
He closes with you thus,—' I know the gentle-
man,

I saw him yesterday, or t' other day,
Or then, or then, with such or such, and, as you
say,

There was he gaming , there o'ertook in's rouse .

There falling out at tennis , ' or, perchance,

'I saw him enter such a house of sale,'

Videlicet, a brothel,—or so forth —

See you now ,

Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth

And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,

With windlases and with assays of bias,

By indirections find directions out .

So, by my former lecture and advice,

Shall you my son. You have me, have you not ?

Rey My lord, I have

Pol God buy ye , fare ye well

Rey Good my lord '

Pol Observe his inclination in yourself

Rey I shall, my lord

Pol And let him ply his music.

As it is common for the younger sort
 To lack discretion Come, go we to the king:
 This must be known which, being kept close,
 might move
 More grief to hide, than hate to utter love
 Come [Exeunt.]

SCENE II — A Room in the Castle

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN,
and Attendants

King Welcome, dear Rosencrantz, and Guilden-
 stern!

Moreover that we much did long to see you,
 The need we have to use you did provoke
 Our hasty sending Something have you heard
 Of Hamlet's transformation, so I call it,
 Since not the exterior nor the inward man
 Resembles that it was What it should be,
 More than his father's death, that thus hath put
 him

So much from the understanding of himself,
 I cannot dream of I entreat you both,
 That, being of so young days brought up with
 him

And since so neighboured to his youth and humour,
 That you vouchsafe you rest here in our court

Some little time, so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather,
So much as from occasions you may glean,
Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,
That, opened, lies within our remedy

Queen Good gentlemen, he hath much talked of
you,

And, sure I am, two men there are not living
To whom he more adheres If it will please you
To show us so much gentry and good will
As to expend your time with us awhile,
For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance

Ros.

Both your majesties

Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty

Gurl.

But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent
To lay our services freely at your feet,
To be commanded

King Thanks, Rosencrantz, and gentle Guilden
stern

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern, and gentle Rosen-
crantz

And I beseech you instantly to visit

My too much changed son —Go, some of you,
 And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is
Gul Heavens make our presence and our practices

Pleasant and helpful to him !

Queen

Ay, Amen !

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and
 some Attendants

Enter POLONIUS

Pol The ambassadors from Norway, my good
 lord,
 Are joyfully returned

King Thou still hast been the father of good
 news

Pol. Have I, my lord ? Assure you, my good
 liege,

I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
 Both to my God, and to my gracious king .
 And I do think—or else this brain of mine
 Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
 As it hath used to do—that I have found
 The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy

King O ! speak of that, that do I long to
 hear

Pol Give first admittance to the ambassadors .
 My news shall be the fruit to that great feast

King Thyself do grace to them, and bring them
in — [*Exit* POLONIUS

He tells me, my sweet queen, that he hath
found

The head and source of all your son's distemper

Queen I doubt it is no other but the main,—
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

King Well, we shall sift him.—

Re-enter POLONIUS, with VOLTIMAND and
CORNELIUS

Welcome, my good friends

Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Nor-
way?

Volt Most fair return of greetings and desires
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies, which to him appeared
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack,
But, better looked into, he truly found
It was against your highness whereat grieved,—
That so his sickness, age, and impotence,
Was falsely borne in hand,—sends out arrests
On Fortinbras, which he, in brief, obeys,
Receives rebuke from Norway, and, in fine,
Makes vow before his uncle, never more
To give th' assay of arms against your majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee.

And his commission to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack
With an entreaty, herein further shown,

[*Giving a paper.*

That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprise,
On such regards of safety, and allowance,
As therein are set down

King

It likes us well,

And, at our more considered time, we'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business

Meantime, we thank you for your well-took
labour

Go to your rest, at night we'll feast together:
Most welcome home!

[*Exeunt VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.*

Pol

This business is well ended —

My Laege, and Madam, to expostulate

What majesty should be, what duty is,

Why day is day, night, night, and time is
time,

Were nothing but to waste night, day, and
time

Therefore, since brevity's the soul of wit,

And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,

I will be brief Your noble son is mad

Mad call I it, for, to define true madness,

What is 't, but to be nothing else but mad ?
But let that go

Queen More matter, with less art

Pol Madam, I swear, I use no art at all
That he is mad, 't is true 't is true 't is pity ,
And pity 't is 't is true —A foolish figure
But farewell it, for I will use no art
Mad let us grant him, then, and now re-
mains,

That we find out the cause of this effect ,
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cause .
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus
Perpend.

I have a daughter , have, whilst she is mine ,
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this now gather, and surmise
—' To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most
beautified Ophelia,'—

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase 'beautified' is
a vile phrase , but you shall hear —Thus .

'In her excellent-white bosom, these,' &c —

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her ?

Pol. Good madam, stay awhile , I will be faith-
ful —

[*Reads*] 'Doubt thou the stars are fire ,
Doubt, that the sun doth move ,

Doubt truth to be a liar ,

But never doubt, I love

'O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers, I have not art to reckon my groans , but that I love thee best, O, most best, believe it. Adieu

'Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, HAMLET'

This in obedience hath my daughter showed me ;
And more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
All given to mine ear

King But how hath she
Received his love ?

Pol What do you think of me ?

King As of a man faithful and honourable

Pol I would fain prove so But what might
you think,

When I had seen this hot love on the wing,—

As I perceived it, I must tell you that,

Before my daughter told me,—what might you,

O, my dear majesty, your queen here, think,

If I had played the desk, or table-book ,

O, given my heart a winking, mute and dumb ,

Or looked upon this love with idle sight

What might you think ? No, I went round to work,

And my young mistress thus I did bespeak

'Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy star ;

This must not be.' and then I precepts gave
her,

That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice ;
And he, repulséd,—a short tale to make,—
Fell into a sadness , then into a fast ,
Thence to a watch , thence into a weakness ,
Thence to a lightness , and, by this declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we mourn for

King Do you think 't is this ?

Queen It may be, very likely

Pol Hath there been such a time, I'd fain know
that,

That I have positively said, ' 'T is so,'
When it proved otherwise ?

King Not that I know

Pol [*Pointing to his head and body*] Take
this from this, if this be otherwise

If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre

King How may we try it further ?

Pol You know, sometimes he walks four hours
together

Here in the lobby

Queen So he does, indeed

Pol At such a time I'll loose my daughter to
him

Be you and I behind an arras then,
Mark the encounter - if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state
But keep a farm and carters.

King We will try it

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch
comes reading

Pol Away! I do beseech you, both away -
I'll board him presently — O! give me leave —
[*Exeunt KING, QUEEN, and Attendants.*]

Enter HAMLET, reading.

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

Ham Well, God-a-mercý

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent well, you are a fishmonger.

Pol Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol Honest, my lord?

Ham Ay, sir to be honest, as this world goes,
is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my lord

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead

dog, being a god kissing carrion,—Have you a daughter ?

Pol I have, my lord

Ham Let her not walk i' the sun conception is a blessing , but not as your daughter may conceive —Friend, look to't

Pol How say you by that ?—[*Aside*] Still harping on my daughter —yet he knew me not at first , he said, I was a fishmonger He is far gone, far gone and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love , very near this I'll speak to him again —What do you read, my lord ?

Ham Words, words, words

Pol What is the matter, my lord ?

Ham Between who ?

Pol I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Ham Slanders, sir for the satirical slave says herè, that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams all of which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down , for yourself, sir, shall grow old as I am if like a crab you could go backward.

Pol [*Aside*] Though this be madness, yet there's

method in 't.—Will you walk out o' the air, my lord?

Ham Into my grave

Pol Indeed, that is out o' the air—[*Aside*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you

Ham You cannot, sir, take from me anything that I will more willingly part withal—except my life, except my life, except my life

Pol Fare you well, my lord.

Ham These tedious old fools!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

Pol You go to seek the Lord Hamlet, there he
IS

Ros [To POLONIUS] God save you, sir!

[*Exit POLONIUS.*

Guild Mine honoured lord!—

Ros My most dear lord!

Ham My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Ros As the indifferent children of the earth

Gul Happy, in that we are not overhappy ,

On Fortune's cap we are not the very button

Ham Nor the soles of her shoe ?

Ros Neither, my lord

Ham Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours ?

Gul 'Faith, her privates we

Ham In the secret parts of Fortune ? O ! most true , she is a strumpet What news ?

Ros None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest

Ham Then is doomsday near , but your news is not true Let me question more in particular what have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither ?

Gul Prison, my lord ?

Ham Denmark 's a prison.

Ros Then is the world one

Ham A goodly one , in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one of the worst

Ros We think not so, my lord

Ham Why, then, 't is none to you , for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so to me it is a prison.

Ros Why, then your ambition makes it one 'tis too narrow for your mind

Ham O God ! I could be bounded in a nut-shell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams

Gul. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition, for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream

Ham A dream itself is but a shadow

Ros Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow

Ham Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretched heroes the beggars' shadows Shall we to the court ? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Ros, Gul We'll wait upon you.

Ham No such matter I will not sort you with the rest of my servants, for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore ?

Ros To visit you, my lord, no other occasion

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks, but I thank you and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear, a halfpenny Were you not sent for ? Is it your own inclining ? Is it a

free visitation? Come, come, deal justly with me.
come, come, nay, speak

Gul What should we say, my lord?

Ham Why, anything, but to the purpose. You were sent for, and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour, I know, the good king and queen have sent for you

Ros To what end, my lord?

Ham That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for or no

Ros What say you?

Ham Nay, then I have an eye of you.—If you love me, hold not off

Gul My lord, we were sent for

Ham I will tell you why, so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises, and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory,

this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appeareth no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is man ! how noble in reason ! how infinite in faculty ! in form and moving how express and admirable ! in action how like an angel ! in apprehension how like a god ! the beauty of the world ! the paragon of animals ! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust ? man delights not me ;—no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so

Ros My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said, man delights not me ?

Ros To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you, we coted them on the way, and hither are they coming to offer you service

Ham. He that plays the king shall be welcome ; his Majesty shall have tribute of me the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target, the lover shall not sigh gratis, the humorous man shall end his part in peace, the clown shall make those laugh, whose lungs are tickled o' the sere ; and the

lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't What players are they?

Ros Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city

Ham How chances it they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Ros I think, their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

Ros No, indeed, they are not.

Ham. How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

Ros Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: but there is, sir, an aery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for't these are now the fashion, and so berattle the common stages—so they call them—that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills, and dare scarce come thither.

Ham What, are they children? who maintains them? how are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players—as it is most like, if their means are not better—then writers do them wrong,

to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Ros 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides, and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them to controversy there was, for a while, no money, bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question

Ham. Is it possible?

Gul O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham Do the boys carry it away?

Ros Ay, that they do, my lord Hercules and his load too

Ham. It is not very strange, for my uncle is King of Denmark, and those that would make mouths at him while my father lived, gave twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece, for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out

[Flourish of trumpets within.]

Gul There are the players

Ham Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands Come, then, the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony, let me comply with you in this garb, lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward should more appear like entertainment than yours

You are welcome , but my uncle-father, and aunt-mother, are deceived.

Gul In what, my dear lord ?

Ham. I am but mad north-north-west when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.

Re-enter POLONIUS

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen !

Ham. Mark you, Guildenstern ,—and you too ,—at each ear a hearer that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swathing-clouts

Ros Happily he's the second time come to them , for they say an old man is twice a child.

Ham I will prophesy, he comes to tell me of the players , mark it.—You say right, sir o' Monday morning 't was then indeed

Pol My lord, I have news to tell you

Ham My lord, I have news to tell you. . When Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

Pol The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham Buz, buz !

Pol Upon my honour,—

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass,—

Pol The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem

unlimited Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light For the law of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men

Ham 'O Jephthah, judge of Israel,' what a treasure hadst thou !

Pol What treasure had he, my lord ?

Ham Why,

 ' One fair daughter, and no more,
 The which he loved passing well '

Pol [*Aside.*] Still on my daughter

Ham Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah ?

Pol If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows, then, my lord ?

Ham Why,

 ' As by lot, God wot,'
and then, you know,

 ' It came to pass, as most like it was,'—
the first row of the pious chanson will show you more, for look, where my abridgment comes.

Enter four or five Players

You are welcome, masters, welcome all—I am glad to see thee well—welcome, good friends—O, my old friend, why, thy face is valanced since I saw thee last com'st thou to beard me in Denmark ?

—What! my young lady and mistress! By's lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring. Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at anything we see. we'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality, come, a passionate speech.

1 *Play* What speech, my good lord?

Ham I heard thee speak me a speech once,—but it was never acted, or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 't was caviare to the general. but it was—as I received it, and others, whose judgments in such matters cried in the top of mine—an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said, there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indite the author of affection, but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved 't was *Æneas'* tale to Dido, and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter.—if it live in your memory, begin at this line —let me see let me see —

'The rugged Pyrrhus like the Hyrcanian
beast,'

't is not so —it begins with Pyrrhus —

The rugged Pyrrhus,—he, whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion
smeared

With heraldry more dismal, head to foot
Now is he total gules, horribly tricked
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters,
sons,

Baked and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and damned light
To their vile murders roasted in wrath and
fire,

And thus o'er-sizéd with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks.'—

So, proceed you

Pol 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good
accent, and good discretion.

1 Play 'Anon he finds him

Striking too short at Greeks, his antique
sword,

Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command. Unequal matched,

Pyrrhus at Priam drives, in rage, strikes
wide ;

But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnervéd father falls Then senseless
Ilium,

Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear for, lo, his sword,
Which was declining on the milky head
Of reverend Priam, seemed i' th' air to stick
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood,
And, like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing

But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
Arouséd vengeance sets him new a-work,
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars his armour, forged for proof eterne,
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding
sword

Now falls on Priam —

Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you
gods,

In general synod, take away her power,

Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of
heaven,

As low as to the fiends !'

Pol This is too long

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard —
Pr'ythee say on — he's for a jig, or a tale of
bawdry, or he sleeps.

Say on come to Hecuba.

1 Play ' But who, O, who had seen the mobled
queen '—

Ham The mobled queen ?

Pol That's good, mobled queen is good

1 Play. ' Run barefoot up and down, threatening
the flames

With bisson rheum, a clout upon that head,
Where late the diadem stood, and, for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teem'd loins
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up ;
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pro-
nounced,

But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
The instant burst of clamour that she made—
Unless things mortal move them not at all—

Would have made milch the burning eyes of
heaven,

And passion in the gods '

Pol Look, whe'er he has not turned his colour,
and has tears in 's eyes '—Pi'ythee, no more

Ham 'Tis well, I'll have thee speak out the
rest of this soon —Good my lord, will you see the
players well bestowed? Do you hear, let them be
well used, for they are the abstract and brief
chronicles of the time after your death you were
better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while
you lived

Pol My lord, I will use them according to their
desert

Ham God's bodikin, man, much better use
every man after his desert, and who should scape
whipping? Use them after your own honour and
dignity the less they deserve, the more merit is in
your bounty Take them in.

Pol Come, sirs

Ham Follow him, friends we'll hear a play to-
morrow [*Exit POLONIUS, with all the Players ex-
cept the First*] Dost thou hear me, old friend? can
you play the Murder of Gonzago?

1 Play Ay, my lord

Ham We'll have it to-morrow night You could,
for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen

lines, which I would set down and insert in't, could you not ?

1 *Play* Ay, my lord

Ham Very well — Follow that lord, and look you mock him not. [*Exit First Player*] My good friends [*to Ros and GUIL*], I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore

Ros Good my lord !

Ham Ay, so, God bye to you —

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN*]

Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I !

Is it not monstrous, that this player here,

But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,

Could force his soul so to his whole conceit,

That, from her working, all his visage wanned,

Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,

A broken voice, and his whole function suiting

With forms to his conceit ? and all for nothing !

For Hecuba !

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,

That he should weep for her ? What would he
do

Had he the motive and the cue for passion

That I have ? He would drown the stage with
tears,

And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,

Make mad the guilty and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed,
The very faculties of eyes and ears
Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing, no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damned defeat was made Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the
throat,

As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?
Ha!

'Swounds! I should take it for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-livered, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter, or, ere this,
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal Bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless vil
lain!

O, vengeance!

Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murdered,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,

And fall a-cursing, like a very diab,

A scullion !

Fie upon 't ! foh ! About, my brain !—I have heard

That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,

Have by the very cunning of the scene

Been struck so to the soul, that presently

They have proclaimed their malefactions ,

For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak

With most miraculous organ. I'll have these

players

Play something like the murder of my father

Before mine uncle I'll observe his looks ,

I'll tent him to the quick if he but blench,

I know my course The spirit that I have seen

May be the devil . and the devil hath power

To assume a pleasing shape , yea, and, perhaps,

Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,

As he is very potent with such spirits,

Abuses me to damn me I'll have grounds

More relative than this —the play's the thing,

Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king

[Exit

ACT III

SCENE I — A Room in the Castle

Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSEN
CRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN

King. And can you, by no drift of conference,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess he feels himself distracted,
But from what cause he will by no means speak

Guil Nor do we find him forward to be sounded
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state

Queen Did he receive you well?

Ros Most like a gentleman

Guil But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros Niggard of question, but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply.

Queen Did you assay him
To any pastime?

Ros Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way of these we told
him.

And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it. They are about the court,
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him

Pol

'Tis most true :

And he beseeched me to entreat your majesties
To hear and see the matter

King. With all my heart, and it doth much content me

To hear him so inclined

Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights

Ros We shall, my lord

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN*]

King

Sweet Gertrude, leave us too

For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 't were by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia.

Her father, and myself,—lawful espials,—
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge;
And gather by him, as he is behaved,
If 't be the affliction of his love or no
That thus he suffers for

Queen

I shall obey you —

And, for your part, Ophelia, I do wish,
That your good beauties be the happy cause

Of Hamlet's wildness, so shall I hope, your
virtues

Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours

Oph Madam, I wish it may

[*Exit* QUEEN

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here — Gracious, so please
you,

We will bestow ourselves — [*To* OPHELIA.] Read
on this book,

That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness — We are oft to blame in this, —
'Tis too much proved, that, with devotion's visage
And pious action we do sugar o'er
The devil himself

King [*Aside.*] O ' 'tis too true!

How smart a lash that speech doth give my con-
science!

The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,
Than is my deed to my most painted word.
O heavy burden!

Pol I hear him coming let's withdraw, my
lord. [*Exeunt* KING and POLONIUS

Enter HAMLET

Ham To be, or not to be, that is the question —

Whether 't is nobler in the mind 'to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them ?—To die,—to sleep,
No more —and, by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to,—'t is a consummation
Devoutly to be wished To die,—to sleep —
To sleep ! perchance to dream —ay, there's the
rub ,
For in that sleep of death what dreams may
come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect,
That makes calamity of so long life
For who would bear the whips and scorns of
time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin ? who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,—
'The undiscovered country, from whose bound
No traveller returns,—puzzles the will,

And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of ?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all ,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought ,
And enterprises of great pith and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action —Soft you, now !
The fair Ophelia.—Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remembered

Oph

Good my lord,

How does your honour for this many a day ?

Ham I humbly thank you , well, well, well.*Oph.* My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longéd long to re-deliver ,
I pray you, now receive them*Ham.*

No, not I ,

I never gave you aught

Oph My honoured lord, you know right well you
did ,

And, with them, words of so sweet breath composed
As made the things more rich . their perfume
lost,

Take these again , for to the noble mind,
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord

Ham. Ha, ha ! are you honest ?

Oph My lord !

Ham Are you fair ?

Oph What means your lordship ?

Ham. That if you be honest, and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Oph Could 'beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty ?

Ham Ay, truly, for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness this was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once

Oph Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so

Ham. You should not have believed me, for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of it I loved you not

Oph. I was the more deceived

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery, why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners ? I am myself indifferent honest, but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven ? We are

arrant knaves, all, believe none of us Go thy ways to a nunnery —Where's your father?

Oph At home, my lord

Ham Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in's own house
Farewell

Oph O, help him, you sweet heavens !

Ham If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny Get thee to a nunnery Go, farewell Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool, for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them To a nunnery, go ; and quickly too Farewell.

Oph O heavenly powers, restore him !

Ham I have heard of your paintings too, well enough : God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance Go to, I'll no more on't . it hath made me mad I say we will have no more marriages those that are married already, all but one, shall live , the rest shall keep as they are To a nunnery, go [Exit

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown !
'The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue,
sword ,

The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,
The observed of all observers, quite, quite down !
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That sucked the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh ,
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth
Blasted with ecstasy O, woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see !

Re-enter KING and POLONIUS

King Love! his affections do not that way
tend ,
Nor what he spake, though it lacked form a
little,
Was not like madness There's something in his
soul
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood ,
And I do doubt the hatch, and the disclose
Will be some danger which for to prevent,
I have in quick determination
Thus set it down He shall with speed to
England
For the demand of our neglected tribute :
Haply, the seas, and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel

saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant, it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it

1 Play I warrant your honour

Ham Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 't were, the mirror up to nature, to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now, this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve, the censure of the which one, must, in your allowance, o'erweigh a whole theatre

of others. O, there be players that I have seen play,—and heard others praise, and that highly,—not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted, and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

1 Play I hope, we have reformed that indifferently with us.

Ham O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them: for there be of them, that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though, in the meantime, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready —

[Exeunt Players]

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN

How now, my lord? will the king hear this piece of work?

Pol And the queen too, and that presently.

Ham Bid the players make haste —

[Exit POLONIUS

Will you two help to hasten them?

Ros, Guil We will, my lord

[*Exeunt ROSINCRAUNT and GUILDENSTERN.*]

Ham What, ho, Horatio!

Enter HORATIO

Hor Here, sweet lord, at your service

Ham Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation coped withal.

Hor O, my dear lord,—

Ham Nay, do not think I flatter,
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be
flattered?

No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath sealed thee for herself for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks and blest are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him

In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee —Something too much of this —
There is a play to-night before the king,
One scene of it comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee of my father's death
I pr'ythee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe mine uncle if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy Give him heedful note
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
And, after, we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming

Hor

Well, my lord

If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft

Ham They are coming to the play, I must be
idle

Get you a place

*Danish march A flourish Enter, with his guard
carrying torches, KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS,
OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and
other Lords attendant*

King How faies our cousin Hamlet?

Ham Excellent, i' faith, of the chameleon's dish I eat the air, promise-crammed. You cannot feed capons so.

King I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine

Ham No, nor mine now —[*To POLONIUS*]—My lord, you played once i' th' university, you say?

Pol That did I, my lord, and was accounted a good actor

Ham And what did you enact?

Pol I did enact Julius Cæsar, I was killed i' the Capitol, Brutus killed me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there.—Be the players ready?

Ros Ay, my lord, they stay upon your patience

Queen Come hither, my good Hamlet, sit by me

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

Pol [*To the KING*] O ho, do you mark that?

Ham Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[*Lying down at OPHELIA'S feet*]

Oph. No, my lord

Ham I mean, my head upon your lap?

Oph. Ay, my lord

Ham Do you think I meant country matters?

Oph I think nothing, my lord.

Ham. That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs?

Oph What is, my lord?

Ham Nothing

Oph You are merry, my lord

Ham Who, I?

Oph Ay, my lord

Ham. O God, your only jig-maker! What should a man do, but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within's two hours.

Oph Nay, 't is twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens, die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year, but, by 'r lady, he must build churches then, or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse whose epitaph is, "For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot."

Hautboys play The dumb-show enters

Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly, the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck. He lays him down upon a bank of flowers. She, seeing

him asleep, leaves him Anon comes in another man, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the sleeper's ears, and leaves him The Queen returns, finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The Poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her The dead body is carried away The Poisoner uses the Queen with gifts she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love [Exeunt

Oph. What means this, my lord?

Ham. Marry, this is mitching mallecho, it means mischief

Oph. Belike this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter Prologue

Ham. We shall know by this fellow the players cannot keep counsel, they 'll tell all

Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Ham. Ay, or any show that you will show him be not you ashamed to show, he'll not shame to tell you what it means

Oph. You are naught, you are naught. I'll mark the play

Pro. For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,

We beg your hearing patiently [Exit

Ham. Is this a prologue or the posy of a ring?

Oph 'T is brief, my lord

Ham As woman's love

Enter a King and a Queen.

P King Full thirty times hath Phoebus' cart
gone round

Neptune's salt wash, and Tellus' orb'd ground,
And thirty dozen moons, with borrow'd sheen,
About the world have times twelve thirties been,
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands

P Queen So many journeys may the sun and
moon

Make us again count o'er ere love be done
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer and from your former state,
That I distrust you Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must,
For women fear too much, even as they love,
And women's fear and love hold quantity,
In neither aught, or in extremity
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know,
And as my love is sized, my fear is so
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear,
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.

P King Faith, I must leave thee, love, and
shortly too,

My operant powers their functions leave to do,
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honoured, beloved; and, haply, one as kind
For husband shalt thou—

P Queen

O, confound the rest!

Such love must needs be treason in my breast
In second husband let me be accurst!

None wed the second, but who killed the first

Ham. [Aside] Wormwood, wormwood.

P Queen The instances that second marriage
move

Are base respects of thrift, but none of love:

A second time I kill my husband dead

When second husband kisses me in bed

P King I do believe you think what now you
speak,

But what we do determine oft we break.

Purpose is but the slave to memory,

Of violent birth, but poor validity,

Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree,

But fall unshaken, when they mellow be

Most necessary 't is, that we forget

To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt.

What to ourselves in passion we propose,

The passion ending, doth the purpose lose:

The violence of either grief or joy

Their own enactures with themselves destroy

Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament,
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye, nor 't is not strange
That even our loves should with our fortunes
change

For 't is a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love
The great man down, you mark his favourite
flies,

The poor advanced makes friends of enemies
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend
For who not needs shall never lack a friend,
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy
But, orderly to end where I begun,—
Our wills and fates do so contrary run,
That our devices still are overthrown,
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own
So think thou wilt no second husband wed,
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.

P Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven
light,

Sport and repose lock from me day and night,
To desperation turn my trust and hope,
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope,
Each opposite, that blanks the face of joy,
Meet what I would have well, and it destroy;

Both here, and hence, pursue me lasting strife,—
If, once a widow, ever I be wife !

Ham If she should break it now ?

P King 'T is deeply sworn Sweet, leave me
here awhile

My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep [Sleeps

P Queen Sleep rock thy brain ,
And never come mischance between us twain [Exit

Ham Madam, how like you this play ?

Queen The lady doth protest too much, methinks

Ham. O, but she'll keep her word

King Have you heard the argument ? Is there
no offence in 't ?

Ham No, no , they do but jest, poison in jest ,
no offence i' the world

King What do you call the play ?

Ham The Mouse-trap Mary, how ? Tropi-
cally This play is the image of a murder done
in Vienna Gonzago is the duke's name , his wife,
Baptista You shall see anon , 't is a knavish
piece of work but what of that ? your majesty,
and we, that have free souls, it touches us not let
the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung

Enter LUCIANUS

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king

Oph You are a good chorus, my lord

Ham I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying

Oph You are keen, my lord, you are keen

Ham It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge

Oph Still better, and worse

Ham So you must take your husbands —
Begin, murderer, leave thy damnable faces, and begin
Come —the croaking raven doth bellow
for revenge

Luc Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and
time agreeing,
Confederate season, else no creature seeing,
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice in-
fected,

Thy natural magic and dire property
On wholesome life usurp immediately

[*Pours the poison into the Sleeper's ears*]

Ham He poisons him i' the garden for 's estate
His name's Gonzago the story is extant, and writ
in choice Italian. You shall see anon how the
murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph The king rises

Ham What, frightened with false fire?

Queen How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play

King. Give me some light !—away !

All Lights, lights, lights !

[*Exeunt all but HAMLET and HORATIO*

Ham. Why, let the stricken deer go weep,

The hart ungalléd play ,

For some must watch, while some must
sleep

Thus runs the world away

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers—if
the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me—with
two Provincial roses on my razed shoes, get me
a fellowship in a cry of players, sir ?

Hor. Half a share

Ham. A whole one, I

For thou dost know, O Damon dear,

This realm dismantled was

Of Jove himself , and now reigns here

A very, very—pajock

Hor. You might have rhymed

Ham. O good Horatio, I 'll take the ghost's
word for a thousand pound Didst perceive ?

Hor. Very well, my lord

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning,—

Hor. I did very well note him

Ham. Ah, ha !—Come, some music ! come, the
recorders !

For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike,—he likes it not, perdy.—

Come, some music !

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

Guil Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with
you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history

Guil. The king, sir,—

Ham Ay, sir, what of him ?

Guil Is, in his retirement, marvellous dis-
tempered

Ham With drink, sir ?

Guil. No, my lord, rather with choler

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more
richer to signify this to his doctor, for, for me to
put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge
him into far more choler

Guil Good my lord, put your discourse into
some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair

Ham. I am tame, sir,—pronounce

Guil The queen, your mother, in most great
affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham You are welcome

Guil Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of
the right breed If it shall please you to make
me a wholesome answer I will do your mother's
|

commandment, if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot

Guit. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer, my wit's diseased—but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command, or, rather, as you say, my mother, therefore no more, but to the matter—My mother, you say,—

Ros. Then, thus she says. Your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother!—But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? impart.

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do still, by these pick-purses and stealers.

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of discontenter? you do surely bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham Ay, sir, but 'While the grass grows'
—the proverb is something musty

Enter Players with recorders

O, the recorders let me see one —To withdraw
with you —Why do you go about to recover the
wind of me, as if you would drive me into a
toil?

Guil O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my
love is too unmannerly

Ham I do not well understand that. Will you
play upon this pipe?

Guil My lord, I cannot.

Ham I pray you.

Guil Believe me, I cannot

Ham I do beseech you

Guil I know no touch of it, my lord

Ham It is as easy as lying govern these ven-
tages with your finger and thumb, give it breath
with your mouth, and it will discourse most
eloquent music Look you, these are the stops

Guil But these cannot I command to any
utterance of harmony, I have not the skill

Ham Why, look you now, how unworthy a
thing you make of me You would play upon me,
you would seem to know my stops, you would
pluck out the heart of my mystery, you would

sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak. Why do you think that I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me —

Enter POLONIUS

God bless you, sir!

Pol My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 't is like a camel, indeed.

Ham Methinks, it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is backed like a weasel.

Ham Or, like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham Then will I come to my mother by-and-by — They fool me to the top of my bent. — I will come by-and-by

Pol I will say so

[*Exit*

Ham. By-and-by is easily said — Leave me, friends. [*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN,

HORATIO, &c

'T is now the very witching time of night

When churchyard^s yawn, and hell itself breathes
out

Contagion to this world now could I drink hot
blood,

And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on Soft now, to my
Mother —

O heart, lose not thy nature , let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom ,
Let me be cruel, not unnatural,
I will speak daggers to her, but use none.
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites
How in my words soever she be shent,
To give them seals never, my soul, consent ! [*Exit*

SCENE III —A Room in the Same.

Enter KING, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN

King. I like him not, nor stands it safe with
us

To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you
I your commission will forthwith despatch,
And he to England shall along with you
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so dangerous as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies

Gul We will ourselves provide
Most holy and religious fear it is
To keep those many many bodies safe
That live and feed upon your majesty

Ros The single and pecuniar life is bound,
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from noyance , but much more
That spirit upon whose weal depends and rests
The lives of many The cease of majesty
Dies not alone , but, like a gulf, doth draw
What's near it with it , it is a massy wheel,
Fixed on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortised and adjoined , which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boisterous ruin Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan

King Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy
voyage ,
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed

Ros , Gul We will haste us
[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

Enter POLONIUS

Pol My lord, he's going to his mother's closet
Behind the arras I'll convey myself,

To hear the process. I'll warrant, she'll tax him
home,

And as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege.
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know

King

Thanks, dear my lord

[*Exit POLONIUS*]

O! my offence is rank, it smells to heaven
It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,
A brother's murder!—Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will,
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent,
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves
mercy,

But to confront the visage of offence?
And what's in prayer, but this two-fold force,—
To be forestall'd, ere we come to fall,
Or pardoned, being down? Then, I'll look up
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer

Can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul
murder?—

That cannot be, since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardoned, and retain the offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft 't is seen, the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law but 't is not so above,
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature, and we ourselves compelled,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can what can it not?
Yet what can it, when one can not repent?
O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more engaged! Help, angels! Make assay -
Bow, stubborn knees, and, heart with strings of
steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!
All may be well.

[Retires and kneels.]

Enter HAMLET

Ham Now might I do it, pat, now he is pray-
ing,

And now I'll do 't —and so he goes to heaven .
And so am I reveng'd? that would be scanned
A villain kills my father , and, for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.

Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread ,
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as
May ,
And how his audit stands who knows save
Heaven?

But, in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him And am I, then, revenged,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and seasoned for his passage?
No

Up, sword , and know thou a more horrid
hent

When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage ,
Or in the incestuous pleasures of his bed ,
At gaming, swearing , or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in 't ,
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And that his soul may be as damned and
black

As hell, whereto it goes My mother stays
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days [Exit

The KING rises and advances

King My words fly up, my thoughts remain
below

Words without thoughts never to heaven go

[*Exit*

SCENE IV — A Room in the Same

Enter QUEEN and POLONIUS

Pol He will come straight Look you lay home
to him

Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear
with,

And that your grace hath screened and stood be-
tween

Much heat and him I'll silence me e'en
here

Pray you, be round with him

Ham [*Within*] Mother, mother, mother!

Queen I'll warrant you,

Fear me not withdraw, I hear him coming

[*POLONIUS hides himself behind the arras*

Enter HAMLET

Ham Now, mother, what's the matter?

Queen Hamlet thou hast thy father much of-
fended

Ham Mother, you have my father much of-fended

Queen Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue

Ham Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue

Queen Why, how now, Hamlet?

Ham What's the matter now?

Queen Have you forgot me?

Ham No, by the rood, not so

You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife ,
And—would it were not so—you are my mother

Queen Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can speak

Ham Come, come, and sit you down , you shall not budge ,

You go not till I set you up a glass

Where you may see the inmost part of you

Queen What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?

Help, help, ho !

Pol [*Behind*] What, ho ! help, help, help !

Ham How now ! a rat? [*Draws*] Dead for a ducat, dead !

[*Makes a pass through the arras*

Pol [*Behind*] O ! I am slain [*Falls, and dies*

Queen O me, what hast thou done ?

Ham

Nay, I know not.

Is it the king?

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed, almost as bad, good mother,

As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king!

Ham

Ay, lady, 't was my word.

[Lifts up the arras, and sees POLONIUS.]

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

I took thee for thy better take thy fortune;

Thou find'st, to be too busy is some danger.—

Leave wringing of your hands peace; sit you down,

And let me wring your heart for so I shall,

If it be made of penetrable stuff,

If damnéd custom have not braz'd it so,

That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy tongue

In noise so rude against me?

Ham

Such an act

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;

Calls virtue, hypocrite, takes off the rose

From the fair forehead of an innocent love,

And sets a blister there, makes marriage vows

As false as dicers' oaths O, such a deed,

As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words heaven's face doth glow,
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With trustful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act

Queen

Ay me, what act,

That roars so loud, and thunders in the index ?

Ham Look here, upon this picture, and on
this,

The counterfeit presentment of two brothers
See, what a grace was seated on his brow
Hyperion's curls , the front of Jove himself ,
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command ,
A station like the herald Mercury
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill ,
A combination, and a form, indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man
This was your husband. Look you now, what
follows

Here is your husband , like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother Have you eyes ?
Could you on this fair mountain, leave to feed,
And batten on this moor ? Ha have you eyes ?
You cannot call it love , for, at your age,
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble

And waits upon the judgment and what judgment

Would step from this to this? Sense, sure, you have,

Else could you not have motion, but, sure, that sense

Is apoplexed for madness would not err,
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thralled
But it reserved some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference What devil
was 't,

That thus hath cozened you at hoodman-blind?

Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense,
Could not so mope

O shame, where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a nation's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax
And melt in her own fire proclaim no shame
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,
Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
And reason panders will

Queen

O Hamlet, speak no more!
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul,
And there I see such black and grain'd spots,
As will not leave their tinct

Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed ,
Stewed in corruption , honeying, and making love
Over the nasty sty,—

Queen O, speak to me no more !
These words like daggers enter in mine ears
No more, sweet Hamlet !

Ham A murderer, and a villain ,
A slave, that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord —a vice of kings ,
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket,

Queen No more !

Ham A king of shreds and patches,—

Enter Ghost

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards !—What would your gracious
figure ?

Queen Alas ! he 's mad

Ham Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command ?
O, say !

Ghost Do not forget Thus visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose

Ham. Why, look you there ! look, how it steals
away !

My father, in his habit as he lived !

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal '

[*Exit Ghost*

Que'n. This is the very coinage of your brain
This bodiless creation, ecstasy
Is very cunning in

Ham Ecstasy !

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music It is not mad-
ness

That I have uttered bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word , which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen Confess yourself to Heaven ,
Repent what's past , avoid what is to come ;
And do not spread the compost on the weeds
To make them ranker Forgive me this my
virtue ,

For in the fatness of these p'rsy times
Vutue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good.

Queen O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in
twain !

Ham O, throw away the woiser part of it,
And live the pure with the other half
Good night but go not to mine uncle's bed ,
Assume a virtue, if you have it not
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a flock or livery
That aptly is put on Refrain to-night ,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence the next more easy
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
Either subdue the devil, or throw him out
With wondrous potency Once more, good night
And when you are desirous to be blessed,
I'll blessing beg of you —For this same lord,

[*Pointing to* POLONIUS]

I do repent but Heaven hath pleas'd it so,
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him So, again, good night.—
I must be cruel, only to be kind
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind —
One word more, good lady

Queen What shall I do ?

Ham Not this, by no means, that I bid you do :

Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed ;
Pinch wanton on your cheek , call you his
mouse ,

And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,
Or prddling in your neck with his damned fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft 'T were good, you let him
know ,

For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,
Such dear concernings hide ? who would do so ?
No, in despite of sense, and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,
To try conclusions, in the basket creep
And break your own neck down

Queen Be thou assured, if words be made of
breath

And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me

Ham I must to England , you know that

Queen Alack,

I had forgot 't is so concluded on

Ham There's letters sealed and my two school fellows,—

Whom I will trust, as I will adders fanged,—
They bear the mandate, they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work;
For 't is the sport to have the engine
Hoist with his own petar and 't shall go hard,
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon. O, 't is most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet —
This man shall set me packing!
I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room —
Mother, good night — Indeed, this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.—
Good night, mother

[*Exeunt severally*, HAMLET dragging in
POLOXIUS

ACT IV.

SCENE I —The Same

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN

King There's matter in these sighs, these profound heaves

You must translate, 't is fit we understand them
Where is your son?—

Queen Bestow this place on us a little while

[*Eaeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

—Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night!

King What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea and wind when both contend

Which is the mightier In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
He whips his rapier out, and cries, 'A rat! a rat!'

And, in this brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man

King O heavy deed!

It had been so with us had we been there.

His liberty is full of threats to all,

To you yourself, to us, to every one.

Alas ! how shall this bloody deed be answered ?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrained, and out of
 haunt,

This mad young man, but, so much was our
 love,

We would not understand what was most fit,
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life Where is he gone ?

Queen To draw apart the body he hath
 killed,

O'er whom his very madness, like some ore
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure he weeps for what is done

King O Gertrude, come away
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch
But we will ship him hence, and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse —Ho, Guildenstern !

Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

Friends both, go join you with some further
 aid

Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragged
 him.

Go, seek him out, speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel I pray you, haste in this

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN
Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends,
And let them know both what we mean to
do

And what's untimely done,—
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank
Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air O, come away!
My soul is full of discord, and dismay [*Exeunt*

SCENE II — Another Room in the Same

Enter HAMLET

Ham Safely stowed

Ros, Gwl [*Within*] Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

Ham What noise? who calls on Hamlet? O,
here they come

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

Ros What have you done, my lord, with the
dead body?

Ham Compounded it with dust, whereto 't is
kin.

Ros Tell us where 't is, that we may take it
thence

And bear it to the chapel

Ham Do not believe it.

Ros Believe what?

Ham That I can keep your counsel and not
mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge!
What replication should be made by the son of a
king?

Ros Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir, that soaks up the king's
countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But
such officers do the king best service in the end
he keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his
jaw, first mouthed to be last swallowed: when he
needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing
you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

Ros I understand you not, my lord

Ham. I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps
in a foolish ear.

Ros My lord, you must tell us where the body
is, and go with us to the king.

Ham The body is with the king, but the king
is not with the body. The king is a thing—

Gul A thing, my lord!

Ham Of nothing —bring me to him. Hide fox,
and all after

[*Exeunt*

SCENE III — *Another Room in the Same*

Enter KING, attended

King I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.

How dangerous is it, that this man goes loose !
Yet must not we put the strong law on him
He's loved of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes ,
And where 't is so, the offender's scourge is
weighed,

But never the offence To bear all smooth and
even,

This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause diseases desperate grown
By desperate appliance are relieved,
Or not at all —

Enter ROSENCRANTZ

How now ! what hath befallen ?

Ros Where the dead body is bestowed, my lord,
We cannot get from him

King But where is he?

Ros Without, my lord, guarded, to know your pleasure.

King Bring him before us

Ros ' Ho, Guldens tern ! bring in my lord.

Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN.

King Now, Hamlet, where 's Polonius?

Ham At supper

King At supper! Where?

Ham Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots. your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service, two dishes, but to one table: that 's the end.

King. Alas, alas!

Ham A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm

King What dost thou mean by this?

Ham Nothing, but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King Where is Polonius?

Ham In heaven send thither to see; if your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King [To some Attendants] Go seek him there.

Ham He will stay till you come.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*]

King Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial
safety,—

Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done,—must send thee
hence

With fiery quickness, therefore, prepare thyself
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,
The associates tend, and everything is bent
For England.

Ham For England ?

King Ay, Hamlet.

Ham Good

King So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham I see a cherub that sees them—But,
come, for England !—Farewell, dear mother

King Thy loving father, Hamlet

Ham My mother father and mother is man
and wife, man and wife is one flesh, and so, my
mother Come, for England ! [Exit

King Follow him at foot, tempt him with
speed aboard

Delay it not, I'll have him hence to-night
Away, for everything is sealed and done
That else leans on the affair pray you, make
haste,—

[Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,—

As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
 Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
 After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
 Pays homage to us,—thou may'st not coldly set
 Our sovereign process, which imports at full,
 By letters conjuring to that effect,
 The present death of Hamlet Do it, England,
 For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
 And thou must cure me Till I know 't is done,
 Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.

[*Exit*

SCENE IV —A Plain in Denmark

Enter FORTINBRAS, a Captain, and Forces,
marching

For Go, captain, from me greet the Danish
 king,
 Tell him that, by his license, Fortinbras
 Claims the conveyance of a promised march
 Over his kingdom You know the rendezvous.
 If that his majesty would aught with us,
 We shall express our duty in his eye,
 And let him know so

Cap I will do 't, my lord

For Go softly on

[*Exeunt FORTINBRAS and Soldiers.*

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, &c

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these?

Cap They are of Norway, sir

Ham How purposed, sir, I pray you?

Cap Against some part of Poland

Ham Who commands them, sir?

Cap The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras

Ham Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
Or for some frontier?

Cap Truly to speak, sir, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground
That hath in it no profit but the name
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it,
Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee

Ham Why, then the Polack never will defend
it

Cap Yes, 't is already garrisoned

Ham Two thousand souls and twenty thousand
ducats

Will not debate the question of this straw
This is the imposthume of much wealth and
peace,

That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies—I humbly thank you, sir

Cap. God buy you, sir *[Exit*

Ros Will't please you go, my lord?

Ham I'll be with you straight Go a little
before

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, GLILDENSTEFN, &c

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge ' What is a man,
If his chief good, and market of his time,
Be but to sleep, and feed? a beast, no more
Sure, He, that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and godlike reason
To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event,—
A thought which, quartered, hath but one part
wisdom,

And ever three parts coward,—I do not know
Why yet I live to say, ' This thing's to do ; '
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and
means,

To do 't. Examples, gross as earth, exhort me .
Witness this army, of such mass and charge,
Led by a delicate and tender prince,
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puffed,
Makes mouths at the invisible event .
Exposing what is mortal and unsure
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
Even for an egg-shell Rightly to be great

Is not to stir without great argument,
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honour's at the stake. How stand I, then,
That have a father killed a mother stained,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men
That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,
Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
Which is not tomb enough, and continent,
To hide the slain?—O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!

[*Exit.*

SCENE V.—Elsinore. A Room in the Castle.

Enter QUEEN and HORATIO

Queen I will not speak with her

Hor She is importunate, indeed, distract
Her mood will needs be pitied

Queen What would she have?

Hor She speaks much of her father, says, she
hears

There's tricks i' the world, and hems, and beats
her heart,

Spurns enviously at straws, speaks things in doubt,

Oph Say you ? nay, pray you, mark [*Sings*
He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone ,
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone

O, oh !

Queen Nay, but, Ophelia,—

Oph Pray you, mark [*Sings*
White his shroud as the mountain snow,—

Enter KING

Queen Alas ! look here, my lord. [*Sings*

Oph Larded with sweet flowers ,
Which bewept to the grave did go,
With true-love showers

King How do ye, pretty lady ?

Oph Well, God dild you ! They say, the owl was
a baker's daughter Loid ! we know what we are, but
know not what we may be God be at your table !

King Conceit upon her father

Oph Pray you, let's have no words of this , but
when they ask you what it means, say you this
[*Sings*

To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine

*Then up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,
And dupp'd the chamber door,
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more*

King Pretty Ophelia !

Oph Indeed, la, without an oath, I'll make an
end on 't

*By Gis, and by Saint Charity, [Sings
Alack, and for shame !*

Young men will do 't, if they come to 't ;

By cock, they are to blame

Quoth she, before you tumbled me,

You promised me to wed

So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,

An thou hadst not come to my bed.

King How long hath she been thus ?

Oph I hope, all will be well We must be
patient • but I cannot choose but weep, to think
they should lay him i' the cold ground My brother
shall know of it and so I thank you for your good
counsel Come, my coach ! Good night, ladies ; good
night, sweet ladies , good night, good night. [*Exit*

King Follow her close , give her good watch,
I pray you. [*Exit* HORATIO

O, this is the poison of deep grief , it springs
All from her father's death And now, behold,
O Gertrude, Gertrude !

When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions First, her father slain
Next, your son gone, and he most violent author
Of his own just remove the people muddled,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and
whispers,
For good Polonius' death, and we have done but
greenly,

In hugger-mugger to inter him poor Ophelia
Divided from herself, and her fair judgment,
Without the which we are pictures or mere beasts
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France,
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death,
Wherein necessity, of matter beggared,
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear O my dear Gertrude ' this,
Like to a murdering piece, in many places
Gives me superfluous death [A noise within.

Queen. Alack, what noise is this?

King Where are my Switzers? Let them guard
the door

. *Enter a Gentleman*

What is the matter?

Gent Save yourself, my lord

The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers The rabble call him lord,
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word,
They cry, 'Choose we, Laertes shall be king!'
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the
clouds,

'Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!'

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they
cry!

O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs!

King The doors are broke [Noise within.

Enter LAERTES, armed, Danes following

Laer Where is this king?—Sirs, stand you all
without.

Danes No, let's come in.

Laer I pray you, give me leave.

Danes We will, we will

[*They retire without the door.*

Laer I thank you keep the door—O thou vile
king,

Give me my father

Queen Calmly, good Laertes

Laer That drop of blood that's calm proclaims
me bastard ,

Ores cuckold to my father , brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched
brow

Of my true mother

King What is the cause, Laertes,

That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?—

Let him go, Gertrude , do not fear our person

There's such divinity doth hedge a king

That treason can but peep to what it would,

Acts little of his will — Tell me, Laertes,

Why thou art thus incensed — Let him go, Gertrude —

Speak, man

Laer Where is my father?

King **Dead**

Queen But not by him

King Let him demand his fill

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled
with

To hell, allegiance ! vows, to the blackest
 devil !

Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit !

I dare damnation To this point I stand,

That both the worlds I give to negligence,

Let come what comes , only I 'll be revenged
Most throughly for my father

King Who shall stay you ?

Laer My will, not all the world
And, for my means, I 'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little

King Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death is 't writ in your
revenge
That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend and
foe,
Winner and loser ?

Laer None but his enemies

King Will you know them then ?

Laer To his good friends thus wide I 'll ope my
arms ,

And, like the kind life-rendering pelican,
Repast them with my blood

King Why now you speak
Like a good child and a true gentleman
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment pierce
As day does to your eye

Danes [Within] Let her come in.

Laer How now ' what noise is that ?

Re-enter OPHELIA

O heat, dry up my brains ! tears seven times salt,

Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye !—

By Heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight,

Till our scale turn the beam O rose of May !

Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia !—

O heavens ! is 't possible, a young maid's wits

Should be as mortal as an old man's life ?

Nature is fine in love , and, where 't is fine,

It sends some precious instance of itself

After the thing it loves

Oph They bore him barefaced on the bier ,

Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny

And in his grave rained many a tear,—

Fare you well, my dove !

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade
revenge,

It could not move thus

Oph You must'sing, *Down a-down, an you call
him a-down-a* O, how the wheel becomes it ! It
is the false steward, that stole his master's
daughter

Laer. This nothing's more than matter

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance ,
pray you, love, remember . and there is pansies,
that's for thoughts

Laer A document in madness,—thoughts and remembrance fitted

Oph There's fennel for you, and columbines,—there's rue for you, and here's some for me. we may call it herb of grace o' Sundays —O, you must wear your rue with a difference —There's a daisy. I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died —They say, he made a good end,—

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,—

Laer Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself, She turns to favour and to prettiness

Oph *And will he not come again ?*

And will he not come again ?

No, no, he is dead

Go to thy death-bed

He never will come again

His beard as white as snow,

All flaxen was his poll,

He is gone, he is gone,

And we cast away moan

God ha' mercy on his soul !

And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God buy
you ! • [Exit

Laer Do you see this ? O God !

King Laertes, I must commune with your grief,

Or you deny me right Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me
If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touched, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction , but if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content

Laer

Let this be so

His means of death, his obscure burial,—
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,
No noble rite nor formal ostentation,—
Cry to be heard, as 't were from heaven to earth,
That I must call 't in question

King

So you shall ,

And where the offence is, let the great axe fall
I pray you, go with me

[*Exeunt*]

SCENE VI —Another Room in the Same

Enter HORATIO and a Seriant

Hor What are they, that would speak with me ?

Serv Sailors, sir they say, they have letters
for you.

Hor Let them come in — *[Exit Servant]*

I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors

I Sail God bless you, sir

Hor Let him bless thee too

I Sail He shall, sir, an't please him There's
a letter for you, sir: it comes from the ambassador
that was bound for England,—if your name be
Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Hor [Reads] 'Horatio, when thou shalt have
overlooked this, give these fellows some means to
the king: they have letters for him. Ere we were
two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike ap-
pointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too
slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour. In the
grapple I boarded them: on the instant they got
clear of our ship, so I alone became their prisoner.
They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy:
but they knew what they did, I am to do a good
turn for them. Let the king have the letters I
have sent, and repair thou to me with as much
haste as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to
speak in thine ear, will make thee dumb, yet are
they much too light for the bore of the matter.
These good fellows will bring thee where I am

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for
England of them I have much to tell thee
Farewell He that thou knowest thine,

HAMLET'

Come, I will give you way for these your letters,
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them [Exeunt

SCENE VII — Another Room in the Same

Enter KING and LAERTES

King Now must your conscience my acquittance
seal,

And you must put me in your heart for friend,
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he, which hath your noble father slain,
Pursued my life

Laer It well appears —but tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirred up

King O, for two special reasons,
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinewed,
And yet to me they are strong The queen, his
mother,

Lives almost by his looks , and for myself,—
My virtue, or my plague, be it either which,—
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her The other motive
Why to a public count I might not go,
Is the great love the general gender bear him ,
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to
stone,

Convert his gyves to graces , so that my arrows,
Too slightly timbered for so loud a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aimed them

Laer And so have I a noble father lost ,
A sister driven into desperate terms,—
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections —But my revenge will come

King Break not your sleeps for that , you must
not think

That we are made of stuff so flat and dull
That we can let our beard be shook with danger
And think it pastime You shortly shall hear
more

I loved your father, and we love ourself ,
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine,—

Enter a Messenger

How now ! what news ?

Mess Letters, my lord, from Hamlet
This to your majesty, this to the queen

King From Hamlet ! who brought them ?

Mess Sailors, my lord, they say, I saw them
not

They were given me by Claudio, he received them
Of him that brought them

King Laertes, you shall hear them —
Leave us [Exit Messenger]

[Reads] 'High and mighty,—you shall know, I
am set naked on your kingdom To-morrow shall I
beg leave to see your kingly eyes, when I shall,
first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the
occasions of my sudden and more strange return

HAMLET'

What should this mean ? Are all the rest comp-
back ?

Or is it some abuse, and no such thing ?

Laer Know you the hand ?

King 'Tis Hamlet's character 'Naked,'--
And, in a postscript here, he says, 'alone'
Can you advise me ?

Laer I'm lost in it, my lord But let him
come

It warms the very sickness in my heart,

That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
' Thus diddest thou '

King If it be so, Laertes,—
As how should it be so ? how other wise ?—
Will you be ruled by me ?

Laer Ay, my lord ,
So you will not o'er-rule me to a peace

King To thine own peace If he be now
returned,—

As checking at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it,—I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall ,
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,
And call it accident

Laer My lord, I will be ruled ;
The rather, if you could devise it so
That I might be the organ

King It falls right
You have been talked of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him
As did that one , and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege

Laer What part is that, my lord ?

King A very riband in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too, for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears,
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness—Two months
since,

Here was a gentleman of Normandy,—
I have seen myself, and served against, the French,
And they can well on horseback, but this gallant
Had witchcraft in 't, he grew unto his seat,
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
As he had been incorpsed and demi-natured
With the brave beast so far he topped my thought
That I in forgery of shapes and tricks
Come short of what he did

Laer A Norman, was 't?

King A Norman

Laer Upon my life, Lamord

King The very same

Laer I know him well he is the brooch,
indeed,

And gem of all the nation

King He made confession of you,
And gave you such a masterly report,
For art and exercise in your defence,
And for your rapier most especially,
That he cried out, 't would be a sight indeed

If one could match you the scriners of their
nation,

He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you opposed them Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,
That he could nothing do but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.
Now, out of this,—

Laer What out of this, my lord?

King Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?

Laer. Why ask you this?

King Not that I think you did not love your
father,

But that I know love is begun by time,

And that I see, in passages of proof,

Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.

There lives within the very flame of love

A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it,

And nothing is at a like goodness still,

For goodness, growing to a plurisy,

Dies in his own too-much That we would do,

We should do when we would, for this 'would'
changes,

And hath abatements and delays as many,

As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;

And then this 'should' is like a spendthrift's sigh,
That hurts by easing But, to the quick o' the
ulcer

Hamlet comes back what would you undertake,
To show yourself your father's son in deed,
More than in words? '

Laer To cut his throat i' the church

King No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarise ,

Revenge should have no bounds But, good
Laertes,

Will you do this, keep close within your chamber
Hamlet, returned, shall know you are come home .
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you , bring you, in fine,
together,

And wager on your heads he, being remiss
Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils , so that with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated, and, in a pass of practice,
Requite him for your father

Laer. I will do't ,

And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,

Where it draws blood, no cataplasme so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death,
That is but scratched withal. I'll touch my point
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death

King Let's further think of this;
Weigh what convenience both of time and means
May fit us to our shape If this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad performance,

'T were better not assayed therefore, this project
Should have a back or second, that might hold
If this should blast in proof Soft,—let me see —
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings,—
I ha't.

When in your motion you are hot and dry,—
As make your bouts more violent to that end,—
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared him
A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck
Our purpose may hold there But stay! what
noise?

Enter QUEEN.

How now, sweet queen?

Queen One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow — Your sister's drowned, Laertes

Laer Drowned !—O, where?

Queen There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream ,
There with fantastic garlands did she come,
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call
them

There, on the pendant boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke,
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread
wide,

And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up ,
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes,
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element but long it could not be,
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laer Alas, then, is she drowned !

Queen Drowned, drowned

Laer Too much of water hast thou, poor
Ophelia,

And therefore I forbid my tears but yet
It is our trick , nature her custom holds,

Let shame say what it will when these are gone,
 The woman will be out — Adieu, my lord !
 I have a speech of fire that fam would blaze,
 But that this folly douts it. [Exit

King Let's follow, Gertrude
 How much I had to do to calm his rage !
 Now fear I, this will give it start again ,
 Therefore let 's follow. [Exeunt

ACT V

SCENE I — A Churchyard

Enter two Clowns, with spades and mattocks

1 *Clo* Is she to be buried in Christian burial,
 that wilfully seeks her own salvation ?

2 *Clo* I tell thee, she is, and therefore make
 her grave straight the crowner hath sat on her,
 and finds it Christian burial

1 *Clo* How can that be, unless she drowned
 herself in her own defence ?

2 *Clo* Why, 't is found so

1 *Clo* It must be *se offendendo*, it cannot be
 else For here lies the point if I drown myself
 wittingly, it argues an act and an act hath three

branches, it is, to act, to do, and to perform. argal, she drowned herself wittingly

2 *Clo* Nay, but hear you, Goodman Delver —

1 *Clo* Give me leave Here lies the water, good: here stands the man, good if the man go to this water and drown himself, it is will he nill he, he goes, mark you that but if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself. argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life

2 *Clo* But is this law?

1 *Clo* Ay, marry, is't, crowner's quest-law

2 *Clo* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of Christian burial

1 *Clo* Why, there thou say'st, and the more pity, that great folk shall have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even-Christian Come, my spade There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers, they hold up Adam's profession

2 *Clo* Was he a gentleman?

1 *Clo* He was the first that ever bore arms

2 *Clo* Why, he had none

1 *Clo* What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says, Adam digged could he dig without arms? I'll

put another question to thee ; if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

2 *Clo* Go to

1 *Clo* What is he, that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *Clo* The gallows-maker, for that frame outlives a thousand tenants

1 *Clo* I like thy wit well, in good faith : the gallows does well, but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill now, thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church. Alas, the gallows may do well to thee To't again, come

2 *Clo* Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 *Clo* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke

2 *Clo* Marry, now I can tell

1 *Clo* To't

2 *Clo* Marry, I cannot tell

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, at a distance

1 *Clo* Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating, and, when you are asked this question next, say, a grave-maker the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan ; fetch me a stoup of liquor

[Exit 2 Clown]

I Clown digs, and sings

*In youth, when I did love, did love,
No thought it was very sweet
To contract, O, the time for-a my behove,
O, methought, there was nothing-a meet*

Ham. Hath this fellow no feeling of his business,
that he sings at grave making?

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of
casiness.

Ham. 'Tis e'en so. the hand of little employ-
ment hath the daintier sense.

I Clo. *But age, with his stealing steps,* [Sings
*Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me into the land,
As if I had never been such*

[Throws up a skull.

Ham. That skull had a tongue in it, and could
sing once: how the knave jowls it to the ground, as
if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder!
This might be the pate of a politician, which
this ass now o'er-offices, one that would circumvent
God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier, which could say, 'Good
morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?'
This might be my Lord Such-a-one, that praised my

Lord Such-a onc's hoise, when he meant to beg it, might it not?

Hor Ay, my lord

Ham Why, e'en so, and now my Lady Worm's; chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see 't Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with 'em? mine ache to think on't

1 Clo *A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade, [Sings.*

For and a shrouding sheet

O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet

[Throws up another skull .

Ham There's another why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quilllets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of

indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box, and must the inheritor himself have no more? ha?

Hor Not a jot more, my lord

Ham Is not parchment made of sheep skins?

Hor Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too

Ham They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that I will speak to this fellow.—Whose grave 's this, sir?

1 Clo Mine, sir.—

[*Sings*

O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet.

Ham I think it be thine, indeed, for thou liest in 't.

1 Clo You lie out on 't, sir, and therefore it is not yours, for my part, I do not lie in 't, and yet it is mine

Ham Thou dost lie in 't, to be in 't and say it is thine. 't is for the dead, not for the quick, therefore, thou liest

1 Clo 'Tis a quick lie, sir, 't will away again from me to you

Ham What man dost thou dig it for?

1 Clo For no man, sir.

Ham What woman, then?

1 Clo For none, neither

Ham Who is to be buried in 't?

1 *Clo* One that was a woman, sir ; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

Ham How absolute the knave is ! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us By the Lord, Horatio, this three years I have taken note of it , the age is grown so picked, that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier he galls his kibe —How long hast thou been a grave-maker ?

1 *Clo* Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last King Hamlet o'ercame Fortinbras.

Ham How long is that since ?

1 *Clo* Cannot you tell that ? every fool can tell that It was the very day that young Hamlet was born , he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham Ay, marry, why was he sent into England ?

1 *Clo* Why, because a was mad a shall recover his wits there , or, if a do not, 't is no great matter there.

Ham Why ?

1 *Clo*. 'T will not be seen in him there , there the men are as mad as he.

Ham How came he mad ?

1 *Clo* Very strangely, they say

Ham How strangely ?

1 *Clo* 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits

Ham Upon what ground ?

1 *Clo* Why, here in Denmark I have been
sexton here, man and boy, thirty years

Ham How long will a man lie i' th' earth ere
he rot ?

1 *Clo* I' faith, if he be not rotten before he die,
—as we have many pocky corses now-a-days, that
will scarce hold the laying in—he will last you some
eight year, or nine year a tanner will last you nine
year

Ham Why he more than another ?

1 *Clo* Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his
trade, that he will keep out water a great while
and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson
dead body Here's a skull now, this skull hath
lain you i' the earth three-and-twenty years

Ham Whose was it ?

1 *Clo* A whoreson mad fellow's it was whose
do you think it was ?

Ham Nay, I know not

1 *Clo* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue ! a
poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once This
same skull, sir, this same skull, sir, was Yorick's
skull, the king's jester

Ham This ?

1 *Clo* E'en that

Ham Let me see. [*Takes the skull*] Alas, poor Yorick!—I knew him, Horatio a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy he hath borne me on his back a thousand times, and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it Here hung those lips, that I have kissed I know not how oft Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now, get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come, make her laugh at that—Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham Dost thou think, Alexander looked o' this fashion i' th' earth?

Hor. E'en so

Ham And smelt so? pah! [*Puts down the skull.*]

Hor. E'en so, my lord

Ham To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Hor. 'T were to consider too curiously, to consider so

Ham No, faith, not a jot, but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead

it · as thus · Alexander died, Alexander was buried,
Alexander returneth into dust, the dust is earth,
of earth we make loam, and why of that loam
whereeto he was converted might they not stop a
beer-barrel?

Imperious Cæsar, dead, and turned to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away
O! that that earth which kept the world in
awe

Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw !
But soft, but soft ! aside —here comes the king,

*Enter Priests, &c, in procession, the Corse of
OPHELIA, LAERTES and Mourners following,
KING, QUEEN, their Trains, &c*

The queen, the courtiers Who is that they
follow,

And with such maiméd rites? This doth betoken,
The corse they follow 'did with desperate
hand

Fordo its own life , 't was of some estate
Couch we awhile, and mark

[Retiring with HORATIO

Laer What ceremony else ?

Ham That is Laertes.

A very noble youth mark

Laer What ceremony else?

Priest Her obsequies have been as far enlarged

As we have warrantise her death was doubtful,
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,

She should in ground unsanctified have lodged
Till the last trumpet, for charitable prayers,
Shards, flints, and pebbles, should be thrown on her

Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial

Laer Must there no more be done?

Priest No more be done

We should profane the service of the dead
To sing a requiem, and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls

Laer Lay her i' th' earth,
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring!—I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministring angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling

Ham What, the fair Ophelia!

Queen Sweets to the sweet farewell

[*Scattering flowers*

I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's
wife

I thought thy bride-bed to have decked, sweet
maid,

And not have strewed thy grave

Laer

O, treble woe

Fall ten times treble on that curs'd head

Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense

Deprived thee of!—Hold off the earth awhile,

Till I have caught her once more in mine arms

[Leaps into the grave]

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,

Till of this flat a mountain you have made

To o'er-top old Pelion or the skyish head

Of blue Olympus.

Ham *[Advancing]* What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them
stand,

Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I,

Hamlet the Dane

[Leaps into the grave]

Laer

The devil take thy soul!

[Grappling with him.]

Ham Thou pray'st not well

I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat,

For though I am not splenitive and rash

Yet have I something in me dangerous,

Which let thy wisdom fear Away thy hand!

King Pluck them asunder

And thus awhile the fit will work on him ,
Anon, as patient as the female dove
When that her golden couplet are disclos'd,
His silence will sit drooping

Ham Hear you, sir .
What is the reason that you use me thus ?
I loved you ever but it is no matter ,
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day

[*Exit*

King I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon
him — [Exit HORATIO
[*To LAERTES*] Strengthen your patience in our
last night's speech ,

We'll put the matter to the present push —
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son —
This grave shall have a living monument
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see ,
Till then, in patience our proceeding be [Exeunt

SCENE II.—A Hall in the Castle.

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO

Ham So much for this, sir . now shall you see
the other ,—
You do remember all the circumstance ?

Hor Remember it, my lord !

Ham Su, in my heart there was a kind of
fighting

That would not let me sleep methought I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes Rashly,—
And praised be rashness for it · let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our dear plots do pall ; and that should
teach us,

There's a divinity that shapes our ends.

Rough-hew them how we will —

Hor

That is most certain.

Ham Up from my cabin,

My sea-gown scarfed about me, in the dark
Groped I to find out them , had my desire ,
Fingered their packet , and, in fine, withdrew
To mine own room again making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission , where I found, Horatio,—
O royal knavery !—an exact command,—
Larded with many several sorts of reasons,
Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
With, ho, such bugs and goblins in my life,—
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off

Hor

Is 't possible ?

Ham Here's the commission read it at more
leisure

But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed ?

Hor I beseech you

Ham Being thus benetted round with vil-
laines,—

Ere I could make a prologue to my brains
They had begun the play,—I sat me down,
Devised a new commission, wrote it fair
I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair, and laboured much
How to forget that learning, but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service —wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote ?

Hor Ay, good my lord

Ham An earnest conjuration from the king,—
As England was his faithful tributary,
As love between them as the palm should flourish,
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
And stand a comma 'tween their amities,
And many such-like 'as's' of great charge,—
That, on the view and know of these contents,
Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allowed

Hor How was this sealed ?

Ham Why, even in that was Heaven ordinant.

I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal,
Folded the writ up in form of the other;
Subscribed it, gave 't the impression, placed it
safely,

The changeling never known Now, the next
day

Was our sea-fight, and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go
to 't

Ham Why, man, they did make love to this
employment,

They are not near my conscience, their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow
'T is dangerous, when the baser nature comes
Between the pass, and fell-incenséd points,
Of mighty opposites

Hor Why, what a king is this!

Ham Does it not think thee, stand me now
upon—

He that hath kill'd my king, and whored my
mother,

Popp'd in between the election and my hopes,
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,

And with such cozenage—is't not perfect con-
science

To quit him with this arm? and is't not to be
damned

To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?

Hor It must be shortly known to him from
England

What is the issue of the business there

Ham It will be short the interim is mine,
And a man's life no more than to say, one
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself,
For, by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his I'll court his favours
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put
me

Into a towering passion

Hor Peace, who comes here?

Enter OSRICK

Osr Your lordship is right welcome back to
Denmark

Ham I humbly thank you, sir—Dost know
this water-fly?

Hor No, my good lord

Ham Thy state is the more gracious, for 't is a
vice to know him He hath much land, and fer
tile let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall

stand at the king's mess 't is a chough ; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Osr Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Your bonnet to his right use, 't is for the head

Osr I thank your lordship, it is very hot

Ham No, believe me, 't is very cold ; the wind is northerly

Osr It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed

Ham But yet, methinks, it is very sultry, and hot for my complexion

Osr Exceedingly, my lord, it is very sultry,—as't were,—I cannot tell how —But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head —sir, this is the matter.—

Ham I beseech you, remember—

[He is left moves him to put on his hat]

Osr Nay, in good faith, for mine ease, in good faith —Sir, here is newly come to court, Laertes, believe me an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent difference of very soft society, and great showing indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would

Ham Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article, and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror, and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more

Osr Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him

Ham The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr Sir?

Hor Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will to't, sir, really

Ham What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr Of Laertes?

Hor His purse is empty already, all's golden words are spent

Ham Of him, sir

Osr I know you are not ignorant—

Ham I would you did, sir, yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me—Well, sir

Osr You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

Ham I dare not confess that lest I should

compare with him in excellence, but, to know a man well, were to know himself

Osr I mean, sir, for his weapon, but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfollowed

Ham What 's his weapon?

Osr Rapier and dagger

Ham That's two of his weapons but, well.

Osr The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses against the which he has imponed, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages and of very liberal conceit.

Ham What call you the carriages?

Hor I knew, you must be edified by the margent ere you had done

Osr The carriages, sir, are the hangers

Ham The phrase would be more germane to the matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides. I would it might be hangers till then But, on six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages, that's the French bet against the Danish Why is this 'imponed,' as you call it?

Osr The king, sir, hath laid, sir, that in a dozen

passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits he hath laid on twelve for nine, and that would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer

Ham How if I answer, no?

Osr I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial

Ham Sir, I will walk here in the hall if it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him an I can if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits

Osr Shall I re-deliver you e'en so?

Ham To this effect, sir, after what flourish your nature will

Osr I commend my duty to your lordship

Ham Yours, yours [*Exit OSRICK*]—He does well to commend it himself, there are no tongues else for's turn

Hor This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

Ham He did comply with his dug before he sucked it Thus has he, and many more of the same bevy, that, I know, the drossy age dotes on, only got the tune of the time and outward habit of encounter, a kind of yesty collection which

carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions, and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out

Enter a Lord

Lord My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osrick, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall he sends to know, if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time

Ham I am constant to my purposes, they follow the king's pleasure if his fitness speaks, mine is ready, now, or whensoever, provided I be so able as now

Lord The king and queen and all are coming down.

Ham In happy time

Lord. The queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes, before you fall to play

Ham She well instructs me *[Exit Lord]*

Hor You will lose this wager, my lord

Ham I do not think so since he went into France I have been in continual practice, I shall win at the odds Thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart, but it is no matter

Hor Nay, good my lord.—

Ham It is but foolery, but it is such a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman

Hor. If your mind dislike anything, obey it I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit

Ham Not a whit, we defy augury there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow If it be now, 't is not to come, if it be not to come, it will be now, if it be not now, yet it will come the readiness is all Since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be

Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, Lords, OSRICK, and Attendants with foils, &c

King Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me

[The KING puts the hand of LAERTES into that of HAMLET]

Ham Give me your pardon, sir. I've done you wrong,

But pardon 't, as you are a gentleman

This presence knows,

And you must needs have heard, how I am punished

With sore distraction What I have done,

That might your nature, honour, and exception

Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness

Was't Hamlet wronged Laertes? Never Hamlet:
 If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
 And, when he's not himself, does wrong Laertes,
 Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.
 Who does it then? His madness If't be so,
 Hamlet is of the faction that is wronged;
 His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy
 Sir, in this audience,
 Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil
 Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
 That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,
 And hurt my brother

Laer I am satisfied in nature,
 Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
 To my revenge but in my terms of honour
 I stand aloof, and will no reconciliation
 Till by some elder masters, of known honour,
 I have a voice and precedent of peace,
 To keep my name ungored But till that time
 I do receive your offered love like love,
 And will not wrong it

Ham I embrace it freely;
 And will this brother's wager frankly play.—
 Give us the foils —Come on.

Laer Come, one for me.

Ham I'll be your foil, Laertes: in mine ignorance

Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed

Laer You mock me, sir

Ham No, by this hand

King Give them the foils, young Osrick —
Cousin Hamlet,

You know the wager?

Ham Very well, my lord,

Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side

King I do not fear it I have seen you both,
But since he's bettered, we have therefore odds

Laer This is too heavy, let me see another

Ham This likes me well These foils have all
a length? [*They prepare to play*

Os. Ay, my good lord

King Set me the stoups of wine upon that
table—

If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath
And in the cup an union shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn Give me the
cups,

And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,

The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,
'Now the king drinks to Hamlet!'—Come,
begin,—

And you, the judges, bear a wary eye

Ham Come on, sir

Laer Come, my lord [*They play.*]

Ham One

Laer No.

Ham Judgment

Osr A hit, a very palpable hit

Laer Well —again.

King Stay, give me drink Hamlet, this pearl
is thine,

Here's to thy health —Give him the cup

[*Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within*]

Ham I'll play this bout first set it by awhile.

Come —[*They play*] Another hit, what say you?

Laer A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King Our son shall win

Queen He's fat, and scant of breath —

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows.

The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

Ham Good madam!

King Gertrude, do not drink

Queen I will, my lord I pray you, pardon me

King [*Aside*] It is the poisoned cup. it is too
late

Ham I dare not drink yet, madam , by-and-by

Queen Come, let me wipe thy face

Laer My lord, I'll hit him now

King I do not think it

Laer [*Aside*] And yet it is almost against my
conscience

Ham Come, for the third, Laertes You but
dally

I pray you, pass with your best violence

I am afeard you make a wanton of me

Laer Say you so? come on [*They play*

Osr Nothing, neither way

Laer Have at you now

[*LAERTES wounds HAMLET , then, in scuffling
they change rapiers, and HAMLET wounds
LAERTES*

King Part them ! they are incensed

Ham Nay, come again [*The QUEEN falls*

Osr Look to the queen there, ho !

Hor They bleed on both sides —How is it, my
lord?

Osr How is 't, Laertes ?

Laer Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe,
Osrick ,

I am justly killed with mine own treachery

Ham How does the queen ?

King She swoonds to see them bleed

Queen No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Hamlet!

The drink, the drink! I am poison'd [Dies

Ham O villainy!—Ho, let the door be lock'd!

Treachery! seek it out [LAFRITES falls.

Laer It is here, Hamlet Hamlet, thou art slain,

No medicine in the world can do thee good.

In thee there is not half an hour of life,

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,

Unbated and evenom'd The foul practice

Hath turned itself on me lo! here I lie,

Never to rise again Thy mother's poisoned

I can no more The king, the king's to blame.

Ham The point evenom'd too!

Then, venom, to thy work! [Stabs the KING

All Treason! treason!

King O, yet defend me, friends, I am but hurt

Ham Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,

Drink off this potion —is thy union here?

Follow my mother [KING dies

Laer He is justly served,

It is a poison tempered by himself —

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet,

Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,

Nor thine on me!

[Dies

Ham Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee —

I am dead, Horatio — Wretched queen, adieu! —
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time,—as this fell sergeant, death,
Is strict in his arrest,—O! I could tell you,—
But let it be.—Horatio, I am dead,
Thou liv'st · report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied

Hor Never believe it

I am more an antique Roman than a Dane,
Here's yet some liquor left

Ham As thou'rt a man,

Give me the cup let go, by Heaven I'll have
it —

O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind
me!

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in
pain

To tell my story [*March afar off, and shot within*
What warlike noise is this?

Osr Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from
Poland,

To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley

Ham

O, I die, Horatio,

The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit :
I cannot live to hear the news from England ;
But I do prophesy the election lights

On Fortinbras he has my dying voice ,
So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited—The rest is silence [*Dies*

Hor Now cracks a noble heart —Good night,
sweet prince ,

And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest !—
Why does the drum come hither ? [*March within*

*Enter FORTINBRAS, the English Ambassadors, and
others*

For Where is this sight ?

Hor What is it ye would see ?

If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search

For This quarry cries on havoc —O proud
death !

What feast is toward in thine eternal cell
That thou so many princes at a shot
So bloodily hast struck ?

1 *Amb*

The sight is dismal,

And our affairs from England come too late

The ears are senseless that should give us hearing,

To tell him his commandment is fulfilled,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead
Where should we have our thanks?

Hor Not from his mouth,
Had it the ability of life to thank you
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arrived, give order that these bodies
High on a stage be plac'd to the view,
And let me speak to the yet unknowing world,
How these things came about so shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters,
Of deaths put on by cunning, and forced cause,
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fallen on the inventors' heads all this can I
Truly deliver

For Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me

Hor Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on
more

But let this same be presently performed,

Even while men's minds are wild, lest more mis-
chance,

On plots and errors, happen

For.

Let four captains

Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage,

For he was likely, had he been put on,

To have proved most royally and for his passage,

The soldiers' music, and the rites of war

Speak loudly for him

Take up the bodies —such a sight as this

Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.

Go, bid the soldiers shoot

*[Exeunt, bearing off the bodies, after which,
a peal of ordnance is shot off]*

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